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MEMOIRS

OF

THE BEAUTIES

OF THE

COURT OF KING CHARLES THE SECOND,

WITH THEIR PORTRAITS.

VOL. II.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE BEAUTIES

OF THE

COURT OF CHARLES THE SECOND,

WITH

THEIR PORTRAITS,

AFTER SIR PETER LELY AND OTHER EMINENT PAINTERS:

ILLUSTRATING

THE DIARIES OF PEPYS, EVELYN, CLARENDON,

AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY WRITERS.

BY MRS. JAMESON.

SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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PORTRAITS AND MEMOIRS

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BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Painted by Sir Peter Lely.

Engraved by

Elizabeth

Dutchess of Somerset.

London, Published by Henry Pickburn, Great Marlborough Street 1831.

THE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET.

"Chaste was she, to detraction's desperation,
And wedded unto one she had loved well—
A man known in the councils of the nation,
Cool and quite English—imperturbable,
Though apt to act with fire upon occasion,
Proud of himself and her;—the world could tell
Nought against either, and both seemed secure—
She in her virtue, he in his hauteur."

LORD BYRON.

In the reign of Charles the Second, there were three Duchesses of Somerset: it has therefore been a matter of some difficulty to appropriate the beautiful picture in the gallery at Windsor to its true original.

The first of these ladies was Frances, widow of William second Duke of Somerset; more celebrated by the title of the Marquis of Hertford—he who eloped with Lady Arabella Stuart in the reign of James the First. She died, very old, in 1679.

The second was Sarah, wife of John fourth Duke of Somerset; the daughter of a physician, and the widow of George Grimstone, Esq. The prints and pictures of

this duchess bear no resemblance to the picture known at Windsor as the Duchess of Somerset, neither is she mentioned in the Court Chronicles of the day: her fame rests upon a far different basis,—that of a foundress of alms-houses and a benefactress of colleges. She died, at a very advanced age, in 1692.

The third duchess (Lady Elizabeth Percy) did not bear that title till 1682, and the picture in question must have been painted before that time. This, however, is not a conclusive argument. According to Horace Walpole and others, Sir Peter Lely died suddenly, in 1680, while painting a portrait of the "*beautiful* Duchess of Somerset:" now there could have been no other *beautiful* Duchess of Somerset alluded to, except the Lady Elizabeth, who so soon afterwards bore that title. There is, I must confess, a maturity of beauty about this portrait, which scarce agrees with the youthful age of the lady. It is difficult to reconcile all these circumstances, and it is not without diffidence, and some feeling of uncertainty, that the accompanying portrait has been adjudged to the Lady Elizabeth Percy.

This beautiful woman, who united in her own person the long-descended honours and vast possessions of the house of Percy, was the sole daughter of Josceline, eleventh and last Earl of Northumberland, in the direct line, and Lady Elizabeth Wriothesley, youngest daughter of the Earl of Southampton.

Her father, dying abroad, left her, an infant of four

years old, heiress of all the immense estates of her family, and holding in her own right six of the oldest baronies in the kingdom: those of PERCY, LUCY, POYNINGS, FITZ-PAYNE, BRYAN, and LATIMER.

The Lady Elizabeth Percy was early consigned to the care of her grandmother, the old Countess of Northumberland,* who gave her a strict and excellent education. But so great an heiress could not be long kept in retirement, or in ignorance of her own rights and importance; even in her infancy she was surrounded by suitors, who sighed,—not for her immature charms, but her broad lands and proud titles; and it was her peculiar fate to be three times a wife, and twice a widow, before she was sixteen.

She was first married, at the age of thirteen, to Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, (only son of the Duke of Newcastle,) who assumed immediately the name and arms of Percy. The young earl was about the same age as his bride, and a boy of great promise; but he unfortunately died within a few months after his marriage, in 1680.

Upon his death, lovers, or rather suitors, again crowded round the youthful countess, then in her fourteenth year. Among them were Thomas Thynne, of Longleate Hall; and the celebrated adventurer, Count Koningsmark. The personal advantages of Koningsmark possibly attracted the notice of the inexperienced girl; but

* Lady Elizabeth Howard, second wife of Algernon tenth Earl of Northumberland.

her relations hastened to prevent the effects of his captivating assiduities, by contracting her to Mr. Thynne; but before the marriage could be actually solemnized, Thynne was murdered in his carriage, while driving through Pall Mall, by three assassins hired by Koningsmark for the purpose. The count himself escaped abroad; but the three wretched instruments of his crime were apprehended, and suffered on the very spot on which it was committed.

Thynne seems to have been a weak man, and a heartless libertine to boot; and Lady Elizabeth may be pardoned for the little regret she bestowed on his tragical fate. As her affections had never been engaged, or even her inclinations consulted in this union, she was, after the first shock, easily consoled; and in three months afterwards, (May 20th, 1682,) she married Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset.

The duke was then in his twentieth year, possessed of a fine commanding person, dark complexioned, and regularly handsome; he was generous, brave, and magnificent, with a cultivated mind, and a taste for the fine arts; but so inordinately arrogant in his manners, and vain of his illustrious rank, that in his own time, and since, he has always been distinguished as the "PROUD DUKE OF SOMERSET."* This ruling foible, which in

* His children were not allowed to sit in his presence; his servants obeyed by signs; and when he travelled, the roads were cleared before him by his outriders. "Get out of the way!" cried one of these to a countryman who was driving a pig, "my lord duke is coming, and does

its excess almost bordered on insanity, threw a shade of ridicule over his character in public; but in private, it was supported by such high qualities of heart and mind, that no man, perhaps, was ever so much adored, and at the same time beheld with such awful reverence by his family and dependents. His wife gave a strong proof of her love for him, when, in spite of her own pride of ancestry, and it was not inconsiderable,—for she had been educated with a high idea of all the importance which attached to her as the heiress and representative of the Percies,—she sacrificed her pride to her affection. Her first act, when she came of age, was to release her husband from the disagreeable obligation imposed by her marriage articles, of changing the name of Seymour for that of Percy; while she dropped her own family name, illustrious and dear as it must have been in her eyes, to take that of her husband,—dearer to her because it was *his:* and this was just as it should be, in the right and true feeling of an affectionate woman.

The duchess was subsequently one of the greatest ornaments of the court of William the Third and Queen Anne; and on the disgrace of the Duchess of Marlborough, succeeded her as Groom of the Stole to the Queen. She died in 1722, after having presented her husband with thirteen children, of whom two only survived her.

not choose to be looked upon." The fellow, a true John Bull, snatched up his pig in a rage, and holding him up at the carriage window, exclaimed, "But I will see him! and *my pig shall see him too!*"

Her eldest son Algernon, Earl of Hertford, distinguished himself in the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and was in every respect one of the most accomplished noblemen of his time. His wife (who, by an odd fatality, was one of the family of Thynne) was that amiable Duchess of Somerset, many of whose letters have been published in Shenstone's correspondence. Through their only daughter, who became the representative of the Percies and Seymours, the title of the former family, and the possessions of both, descended to the present Duke of Northumberland.*

This portrait of the Duchess of Somerset was engraved, many years ago, under the mistaken title of the Countess of Ossory. With the exception of the right hand, the position and drawing of which are really inexcusable, this is one of the loveliest pictures in the Gallery of Beauties. She is represented leaning on a pedestal; the head is a little inclined, the complexion fair, and the features beautiful. The drapery, which is of a pale blue, is rather too negligently put on;—I am at a loss to tell for what it is intended, as it is so arranged that, on the least movement, it must inevitably fall from the lovely form it conceals. The bust is much exposed; but nothing can exceed the delicacy of the tints and pencilling in the neck and bosom, and the sweet and tender

* After the death of the Duchess Elizabeth, the duke married, in 1725, Lady Charlotte Finch. A short time after their union, his young bride wishing to command his attention, playfully tapped him on the shoulder with her fan: her husband, startled at such a freedom, turned upon her frowningly,—"Madam," said he, "my first wife was a Percy, and *she* never took such a liberty!"

manner in which the whole picture is executed. The back-ground is equal to the rest.

[Spring Macky gives the following account of Charles Duke of Somerset, descended of the ancient family of *Seymour*, which made so great a figure in the reign of Edward the Sixth.

"The duke, in the reign of King Charles the Second, had the Garter, and married the heiress of Piercy of Northumberland, which much increased his estate; but he made no considerable figure till the reign of King James, when, being in waiting as bed-chamberman, and at the arrival of the Pope's Nuncio in England, and refusing to assist at the ceremony of the introduction, he was dismissed from all his employments. He, notwithstanding, did not enter into the measures of the Revolution, but for some years warmly opposed the designs of King William's ministers; joined in impeaching the Partition; and protested against acquitting those who advised it. Yet upon the French King's sending the Duke of Anjou to Spain, he came over to the service of his country, and was made President of the Council, and joined with a great deal of zeal in the methods concerted for preventing the growing power of France. On the Queen's accession to the throne, he was made Master of the Horse; and appears at court, with a great deal of warmth, for a party that seems to suffer by King William's death.

"He is of a middle stature, well shaped, a very black complexion, a lover of music and poetry; of *good judgment*, but by reason of great hesitation in his speech, wants expression."

Dean Swift says, that "he had not a grain of good judgment, hardly common sense."—Ed.]

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Frances
Duchess of Richmond

Frances
Duchess of Richmond

THE DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.

" Lost in a labyrinth of doubts and joys,
Whom now her smiles revived, her scorn destroys;
She will, and she will not—she grants, denies,
Consents, retracts, advances, and then flies."

GRANVILLE.

AMONG the beautiful women of Charles's court, none were more conspicuous during their life, or have been more celebrated since their death, than Frances Stewart —" La Belle Stewart " of De Grammont's Memoirs, and afterwards Duchess of Richmond: yet her character as a woman is neither elevated nor interesting; and the passion which the King long entertained for her, and the liberties in which she indulged him, either through weakness or a spirit of coquetry, exposed her, at one period, to very disgraceful imputations. On a review of her whole conduct, as far as it can now be known and judged from the information of contemporary writers, the testimonies in favour of her virtue appear to preponderate; yet it must be confessed that we are left to choose between two alternatives, and it is hard to tell which is the worst: if " La Belle Stewart " was not the most cold and most artful coquette that ever perplexed

the wits of man, she was certainly the most cunning piece of frailty that ever wore the form of woman.

Frances Theresa Stewart was the daughter of Walter Stewart, Esq., third son of Lord Blantyre. The family had been distinguished for loyalty, and had suffered much in the civil wars. Walter Stewart took refuge in France, where, as it appears, either himself or his wife was attached to the household of the widowed Queen Henrietta Maria. Miss Stewart was thus brought up under the eye of royalty; and such was the admiration which even her budding and immature loveliness attracted in the French capital, that Lewis the Fourteenth wished to have detained her, merely as an ornament to his court, and offered her mother to portion and marry her nobly; but on the restoration of the royal family, the Queen-dowager refused to leave her young favourite behind, and brought her, with her mother and her sister Sophia, in her train to England. I have not been able to ascertain the date of Miss Stewart's birth, but she must have been so extremely young at the period of her arrival, as not to have reached her full growth.* Partly through the influence of the Queen-mother, and partly owing to her father's claims on the royal protection, she was appointed one of the Maids of Honour to Catherine of Braganza in 1663; but some months elapsed before her beauty, expanding into all the graces of womanhood, produced that sensation which it afterwards caused in the court.

* Pepys.—He observes, in one passage, that Miss Stewart had grown considerably since he last saw her: this was in 1664.

Soon after her arrival, Miss Stewart formed a kind of friendship with Lady Castlemaine; which, considering her duty to the Queen, and the character of the favourite, was not very reputable, and is scarcely excused by her youth and inexperience. Lady Castlemaine, either confiding in her own charms, or contemning the childish character and trusting in the coldness of the young beauty, affected to patronise her, had her constantly at her side, and almost forced her upon the King's notice. She was the last to perceive what a formidable rival she had raised up for herself; and then, as was natural in her vain, vindictive mind, all her fondness turned to measureless hatred. This enmity extended itself even to the waiting-maids of the rival beauties, and the court was sometimes so disturbed by the squabbles of these abigails, that the King exposed himself to ridicule by interfering to restore peace between them.

There seems to have been but one opinion as to the consummate loveliness of Miss Stewart. Her features were faultless and regular, her complexion dazzling, her hair fair and luxuriant. Her figure, which rose above the common height, was well proportioned, though slender; she danced, walked, dressed with perfect elegance, and sat her horse with peculiar grace. To her Parisian education she owed that *air de parure* which excited De Grammont's admiration, as being so "truly French." She was polished and gentle in her deportment, and does not appear to have been infected by the coarseness of her friend Lady Castlemaine, either in mind or manners. Lord Clarendon adds one trait, which ought not, in jus-

tice, to be omitted,—"that she was never known to speak ill of any one." This constitutional good-nature, her childish disposition, her dislike to all serious pursuits or conversation, and her perfect indifference to state intrigues, must have captivated Charles even more than the transcendant beauty of her face and figure. He had a just aversion for all learned and political ladies: with less reason, though a wit himself, he hated wit in a woman, and any thing like sentiment or refinement appeared to him absolutely superfluous, and merely synonymous with prudery and hypocrisy.

Charms such as Miss Stewart possessed, would certainly have dealt destruction round the whole court, but for two powerful reasons. In the first place, the King's admiration was so early and so ardently displayed, that no well-bred courtier dared openly to interfere with his homage, or obstruct his views; and secondly, Miss Stewart's understanding was not equal to her beauty. The frivolity of her mind, the shallowness of her character, and the coldness of her temper, must have diminished the power of mere external grace, in a court adorned by such women as Miss Hamilton and Lady Chesterfield.

She seems to have possessed just wit enough to feel her power, and use it "for the convenience of her own fortune."* Fond of adoration, yet armed with indifference; weak, yet cunning; and taught by the lessons of an intriguing mother, she was able to turn the arts of men against themselves: she could grant small favours,

* Clarendon, p. 338, folio edit.

hold out alluring hopes, descend, in fact, far beneath a woman's dignity, and strangely compromise a maiden's modesty. But what then? she preserved a sort of negative reputation; and this, I am afraid, is all that can be granted to Miss Stewart. Perhaps, if we consider the situation in which she was placed, even this is much: she was pursued for years by a gay, enamoured, captivating monarch; and not only kept him at bay, and trifled with his passion, but drew within the vortex of her destructive charms some of the courtiers, whose youth or vanity forgot the greatness of the risk in the greatness of the temptation.

Among the most distinguished of these was the Duke of Buckingham, — he who, at once "chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon," could adapt himself to all women as well as to all men. Miss Stewart's amusements were so childish, that Count Hamilton assures us, "tout y était, hors les poupées;"* blindman's-buff, and hunt the slipper, were among her favourite diversions. In the presence-chamber she used to employ herself in building houses of cards; while those who wished to secure the good graces of the beautiful favourite, forsook the basset-table to supply her with materials, or affected eagerly to

* Miss Stewart was not absolutely singular in her penchant for romping or childish diversions. For instance, we find the following memorandum in Pepys: "I did find the Duke and Duchess of York, and all the great ladies, sitting upon a carpet on the ground, there being no chairs, playing at 'I love my love with an A, because he is so and so;' and I hate him with an A, because of this and that;' and some of them, but particularly the duchess herself and my Lady Castlemaine, were very witty."—*Pepys' Diary*, vol. ii., p. 311.

partake her amusement. Among these, Buckingham, that universal genius, was conspicuous for his skill in this frail species of architecture: he sang well; he was an excellent mimic; he composed impromptu fairy tales to admiration, and couplets more remarkable for their wit than their delicacy. These accomplishments, and his gay impertinence, made him so agreeable to Miss Stewart, that, with the King's permission, or at least in his presence, she used to send for the duke to amuse her whenever she felt *ennuyée*. Buckingham's original design had been to secure an influence over her mind, which should enable him, by governing her, to rule his master; but he was caught in his own device: he was unable to resist the charms and flattering smiles of this young Armida; and at length exchanged the character of an amusing companion, to assume that of a sighing Damon. The metamorphosis was so little pleasing to Miss Stewart, that he received a repulse, from which he did not soon recover; and which, as it compromised him with the King, left him completely at her mercy. Instead of making her subservient to his purposes, he was obliged to content himself with being subservient to hers.

The younger Hamilton was another of her lovers: it does not appear that he was distinguished for his skill in card-houses, and by his own confession, he did not pique himself on his ready invention of fairy tales and scandalous stories for her amusement. The manner in which he first attracted the particular notice of Miss Stewart, gives us a strange idea of the coarse manners which prevailed in Charles's court. A brilliant circle had assem-

bled one evening in Miss Stewart's apartments at Whitehall, and Lord Carlingford, an old Irish peer, undertook to amuse the young beauty by making what is vulgarly called a "lantern of his jaws;" that is, holding a lighted taper in his mouth for a certain time. Hamilton would not be outdone in this noble accomplishment, and he confounded his competitor by holding at once two tapers in his capacious mouth. Killigrew humorously complimented him, and offered to back him against a lantern, while Miss Stewart was thrown into ecstasies.

From this time Hamilton was more particularly graced by her favour, and made one of her select *coterie;* he presented her with a beautiful little horse, on which she had an opportunity of displaying her inimitable elegance as an equestrian, and was always at her side to teach her how to manage her spirited steed. In short, the lady became every day more gracious, and the gentleman more enamoured; and if De Grammont, then in love with Miss Hamilton, had not interfered, with a kind of fraternal interest, and roused Hamilton from his inconsiderate dream, this affair would probably have ended in his disgrace, and consequent ruin, as his fortunes depended wholly on the King's favour. De Grammont represented to him that Miss Stewart had in reality no other view than that of making him her "esclave de parade;" that Charles, though in general the most easy and peaceable of men and monarchs, was not to be trifled with on certain points. "Point de raillerie avec le maître, c'est à dire, point de lorgnerie avec la maîtresse." Hamilton had just so much sense, or so little love, as to take this

friendly advice, and withdrew his pretensions in time to escape banishment from the court, which assuredly would have been the consequence of his temerity.

Miss Stewart had also the honour of inspiring with a more serious and fervent passion Francis Digby, one of the sons of the Earl of Bristol, and a brave and accomplished young man. This attachment is not alluded to in the Memoirs of De Grammont, being of a later date than the events recorded there; nor can we guess at the degree of encouragement she may have given him, except by remembering her character. It was sufficient to turn his head, and to make him rush upon danger and death as a relief; he was killed in the sea-fight between the English and the Dutch in the year 1672. His devoted love for Miss Stewart was so well and so publicly known, that Dryden made his fate and her cruelty the subject of his song, "Farewell, fair Armida."*

To these distinguished admirers we may add two others, not unknown to fame. Philippe Rotier, the celebrated medallist, who was called over to England, to cut the die for the new coinage, exhibited her head on the reverse for Britannia. This man became so passionately enamoured of Miss Stewart while she sat to him, as nearly to lose his senses. Walpole says, that the profile which the same artist afterwards

* This song is mere common-place, and deserved the ridicule thrown on it in the *Rehearsal*, where it is ludicrously parodied in "A song made by Tom Thimble's first wife after she was dead."

engraved for a medal, displays the most perfect face ever seen.*

Nat Lee, the poet, has addressed a dedication to her, which is perfect "Midsummer madness;"† but as he was already on the high road to Bedlam, that is not very surprising. The Duke of Richmond‡ also sighed for

* In Waller's poems is an epigram on this medal, beginning—

"Our guard upon the royal side,
On the reverse our beauty's pride," &c.

It contains a compliment to Miss Stewart, which implies that her resistance to the King received its full credit at court; the verses are commonplace, and if there be any point in the last line,

"Virtue's a stronger guard than brass!"

it can only mean that the virtue of Miss Stewart, such as it was, stood her in more stead than the brass of Lady Castlemaine!

† For instance:—"Something there is in your mien so much above what we vulgarly call charming, that to me it seems adorable, and your presence almost divine, whose dazzling and majestic form is a proper mansion for the most elevated soul; and let me tell the world, nay sighing speak it to a barbarous age, (I cannot help calling it so, when I think of Rome and Greece,) your extraordinary love for heroic poetry is not the least argument to show the greatness of your mind and fulness of perfection. To hear you speak, with that infinite sweetness and cheerfulness of spirit that is natural to your grace, is, methinks, to hear our tutelar angels; 'tis to bemoan the present malicious times, and remember the Golden Age; but to behold you, too, is to make prophets quite forget their heaven, and blind a poet with eternal rapture!" &c. &c.

‡ Charles Stewart, Duke of Richmond and Lennox: he was the last Duke of Richmond of his family. After his death, Charles II. conferred the title on the son of the Duchess of Portsmouth. The present head of that branch of the Stewarts, from which the Duke of Richmond and Lord Blantyre (Miss Stewart's grandfather) were both descended, is, I believe, the Earl of Galloway.

her; but he contented himself for some time with distant homage, and with drinking pint bumpers in honour of her beauty, till he had almost lost the little intellect nature had bestowed on him; but what he lost in wit he seems to have gained in audacity, for he made the fair lady understand, that though reduced for the present to drown his love in wine, he was ready to make her a duchess whenever she was willing to elope with him. In the mean time, though the King had the power of keeping all competitors at a distance, he was not himself more *avancé*. Miss Stewart retained her power by standing most pertinaciously on the defensive, without actually driving him to despair. When the Queen fell dangerously ill, she was immediately surrounded by the obsequious and rapacious courtiers, and regarded as her probable successor: the atrocious advice of the Duke of Buckingham on this occasion, has been related in the memoir of Queen Catherine. Miss Stewart, on her quarrel with Lady Castlemaine, had made a great display of duty to the Queen, who treated her with kindness, and seems to have placed some confidence in her discretion. While the King pursued her with the most undisguised and insulting attention, Miss Stewart certainly avenged some of the wrongs of her mistress, and her whole sex, by the dexterity with which she contrived to torment her accomplished but profligate lover. She stooped at times to very equivocal compliances when afraid to lose him; at another moment she would talk of throwing herself into a French convent; and her airs and caprices, her alternate fits of hauteur and tenderness, so agitated the King, that he sometimes appeared at the

council-board like a man distracted. He offered titles which were refused, and presents—which were accepted; he set about reforming his *ménage d'amour* in compliance with her affected scruples and pretended jealousy; he promised to give up Lady Castlemaine, and to discard his singers and actresses, and other superfluous ladies then on his establishment;—in vain! till at a critical moment the Chevalier De Grammont stepped in to his majesty's assistance. De Grammont had just received from Paris a certain calèche, which he presented to the King. Such a calèche, so light, so elegant in its form, so finished in all its appointments, had never before been seen in England: it excited the admiration of the whole court. The Queen, Lady Castlemaine, and Miss Stewart, were each eager to be the first to exhibit themselves in this wonderful calèche. The preference was given to Miss Stewart,—a preference which, it was scandalously insinuated, cost the fair lady some diminution of that immaculate purity upon which she had hitherto piqued herself.

It may be said, in excuse for Miss Stewart, that her situation was peculiar and difficult; the King was armed with a power, which, in those days, few thought of resisting; and either to free herself from his pursuit, or anxious to be made a duchess on reputable terms, she listened to the addresses of the Duke of Richmond. Love (even by her own confession) had little to do with this choice; the duke was merely a good-natured fool, addicted to habitual intoxication; and with nô one recommendation to a lady's grace but

his high rank, and his near relationship to the royal family.

One evening, Lady Castlemaine, who kept paid spies to watch all the movements of her dangerous rival, discovered that she had an appointment with the Duke of Richmond, and instantly informed the King, with the most insulting expressions, to whom, and for whom, he was sacrificed. Driven by this female fury, the King rushed to the apartment of Miss Stewart: her women looked terrified, and denied him access, assuring him that their lady had retired to rest, much indisposed, and unable to see him. He pushed them aside, and forced his way rudely to her chamber. On entering abruptly, he found the fair lady reclining on a couch, and certainly neither indisposed nor asleep. The Duke of Richmond was seated at her side. The inexpressible confusion of the lovers, thus surprised, can only be imagined; and the King, unable to restrain his rage, burst into a torrent of threats and reproaches, which seemed to terrify the duke much more than they discomposed Miss Stewart. The room in which this scene took place overlooked the river; he cast a glance at the window, then at the King, whose eyes sparkled, and whose frame trembled with unwonted passion; and judging it best not to trust his safety within reach of the lion's paw, he made no reply, but with a profound bow, backed out of the apartment, leaving the lady to make her peace as best she might. She, who well knew the character of Charles, assumed a high tone on the occasion, insisted on her right to receive the addresses of

the duke in what manner and at what time she pleased, complained of insult and tyranny, and threatened to throw herself into a nunnery abroad. The King left her in anger, and in the utmost agitation. The following day the Duke of Richmond was ordered to quit the court; but, not being gifted with the assurance or magnanimity of his mistress, or through that best part of wisdom, which some call cowardice and some discretion, he had anticipated the royal commands, and retired the night before.

A few days afterwards, Miss Stewart took an opportunity of throwing herself at the feet of the Queen her mistress, and very pathetically entreated her protection and forgiveness; the good-natured Catherine, now subdued to "the quality of her lord," forgave her. She considered, that since she must needs suffer a rival, it would be better to trust the gentleness of Miss Stewart, than to be outbraved by the insolent termagant, Castlemaine; and that by preventing the flight or marriage of a woman whom her husband loved to distraction, she was giving herself a claim to his eternal gratitude; in consequence, she charitably exerted herself to bring about a reconciliation between the King and his coy, perverse mistress, and succeeded so well, that for awhile all was peace and smiles—a hollow peace and most deceitful smiles. One cold dark night, in the month of March, 1667, Miss Stewart found means to steal from her lodging in Whitehall; and joining the Duke of Richmond at a tavern in Westminster, where he had horses waiting, she eloped with him into

Surrey, and they were privately married the next morning by the duke's chaplain.

"What dire events from amorous causes spring," we are not now to learn from tale or history. A catastrophe, which hung upon the caprice of a giddy woman, influenced the destiny of three kingdoms.

The King was transported with rage at a step which seemed to set his love and power at defiance: all who were suspected of having been privy to the marriage of Miss Stewart with the Duke of Richmond, (among whom were some of the King's best friends and wisest counsellors,) fell under his extreme displeasure. The great Lord Clarendon was deprived of the Seals and banished,* and his dismissal was followed by those consequences, which paved the way for the Revolution.

Pepys, in his Diary, records a conversation which took place soon after her marriage, between the Duchess of Richmond and one of the lords of the court, which is very consistent with her character and conduct through-

* "The Earl of Clarendon's son, the Lord Cornbury, was going to her (Miss Stewart's) lodgings, upon some assignation that she had given him about her affairs, knowing nothing of her intentions. He met the King in the door, coming out, full of fury. And he, suspecting that Lord Cornbury was in the design, spoke to him as one in a rage that forgot all decency, and for some time would not hear Lord Cornbury speak in his own defence. In the afternoon he heard him with more temper, as he himself told me. Yet this made so deep an impression, that he resolved to take the Seals from his father."—*Burnet's History of his Own Time*, vol. i., p. 354.

out. She said, that "when the Duke of Richmond first made love to her, she did ask the King, and the duke did so likewise; and that the King did not at first refuse his consent." She confessed, "that she was come to that pass, as to resolve to have married any gentleman of 1500*l.* a-year, who would have had her in honour, for she could not longer continue in the court without submitting to the wishes of the King, whom she had so long kept off, though he had liberty more than any other had, and more than he ought to have had:" she said that "she had reflected on the occasion she had given the world to think her a bad woman, and that she had no way but to marry, and leave the court rather in this way of discontent than otherwise, that the world might see she sought not any thing but her honour."—"She hopes, though she hath little reason to hope, she can please her lord so as to reclaim him, that they may yet live comfortably in the country on his estate."* Evelyn believed her to be worth about 6000*l.* in jewels; among these was a pearl necklace, then valued at 1100*l.*, the King's first present to her: he had allowed her, while in the court, 700*l.* a-year for her clothes; but these were trifles, compared to the sums lavished on Lady Castlemaine and Lady Portsmouth. There is reason to believe, that had Miss Stewart been more complying, she might have commanded any thing which it was in the power of the weak monarch to bestow.

But little is known of the Duchess of Richmond after

* Pepys, vol. ii., p. 46.

her marriage: she resisted for some time all temptations and entreaties to return to the court; but in 1668, she was appointed one of the ladies of the Queen's bedchamber, and was lodged in Somerset House, where Catherine then resided. Pepys says, "that the apartments allotted to her and the duke were sumptuous, and that the King frequently visited her, but merely in courtesy." About two years after her marriage she was attacked by the small-pox, from which she recovered with great difficulty. The King paid her much attention during her illness, and even afterwards, when the ravages of that cruel disease had so impaired her matchless beauty, that she was scarcely to be recognised: one of her brilliant eyes was nearly quenched for ever.*

In 1672, the Duke of Richmond was appointed ambassador to the court of Denmark, and died at Elsinore the same year. His duchess did not accompany him abroad; and after his death she continued to reside in the court near the person of the Queen, with whom she continued a favourite; and Charles having attached himself to the Duchess of Portsmouth, La Belle Stewart was no longer honoured or dishonoured by his assiduities. She never married again after the loss of her husband, nor do we hear any thing more of her till her death, which took place in 1702. During the latter part of her life, her time seems to have been divided between cards and cats; and in her last will she bequeathed several of her

* Vide Letter from Rouvigny to Louis XIV., in Dalrymple's Memoirs.

favourite cats to different female friends, with legacies for their support. The well-known line in Pope's Moral Essays,—

" Die, and endow a college—or a cat!"

alludes to the will of the Duchess of Richmond.

Warton, with more good nature than probability, supposes this to have been a delicate way of providing for poor, and probably proud gentlewomen, without making them feel that they owed their livelihood to her mere liberality: if this were the only scruple, methinks it would have been more generous to have left the annuities unburthened with the cats. The bulk of her property was left to her nephew, Walter Stewart, commonly called the Master of Blantyre, for the purchase of certain estates, to be attached to the name and family, and called, in memory of the donor, " Lennox's love to Blantyre."

Miss Stewart had a younger sister, Sophia Stewart, married to William, third son of the Lord Bulkeley; she too was celebrated for her beauty.

The engraved portrait is from the Gallery of Beauties at Windsor, and represents the Duchess of Richmond as Diana. She holds a bow in one hand, and with the other supports her dress, as if tripping over the dew. The drapery is of a pale yellow. The features are regular, but deficient in expression; and the nose is not sufficiently aquiline to agree with other portraits

of Miss Stewart, and with the minute descriptions of her person which have been handed down to us. The landscape in this picture is most beautifully painted.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM.

Painted by Wyfving

Engraved by B. Holl.

Duchess of Marlborough

MRS. LAWSON.

"Condamnée à la celebrité, sans pouvoir être connue."

DE STAEL.

BY this title the portrait in the Beauty-room at Windsor has always been traditionally known; but, according to the present style, Mrs. Lawson should properly be Miss Lawson, as the lady here represented was certainly unmarried.*

Horace Walpole, Granger, and others, have supposed this picture to be that of Miss Lawson, one of the daughters of the brave and celebrated Admiral Sir John Lawson, who died in consequence of the wounds he received in the sea-fight of 1665, and of whom Lord Clarendon has left us a noble character.

This opinion, which is unsupported by any proof ex-

* In the reign of Charles II., and long afterwards, Mrs. or Mistress was the usual appellation of a young unmarried woman. Married women were entitled *Madam*. The word *Miss* was seldom used but in a very disreputable sense.

cept the name, appears, on examination, very improbable. Sir John Lawson was a man of very low extraction, who had formerly been a ship-boy of Hull, and rose, under Cromwell, to be admiral of the fleet. Himself and his whole family had been Puritans and Republicans; and, although upon the Restoration he declared for the King, saying it was his duty to defend and fight for his country, no matter who governed it, it is not very likely that his family should be distinguished at court, where he himself seldom came. His eldest daughter married Richard Norton, Esq., of Southwick, which was considered so great a match, that to bestow on her a portion worthy of it, Sir John impoverished himself and the rest of his family.* There is not the slightest reason to suppose that this young lady had any claims to be included in a series of Court Beauties.

The Mrs. Lawson of the Windsor Gallery, must have been one of the five daughters of Sir John Lawson, a Roman Catholic baronet, of Brough, in Yorkshire. He married Catherine Howard, a daughter of the Earl of Carlisle, whose younger brother, Thomas Howard,† became the second husband of Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond, and sister of the Duke of Buckingham. Thus, a woman of high rank and intriguing spirit, connected by her first marriage with the blood royal, and the sister of the reigning favourite, became the aunt of the five Miss Lawsons.

* See Clarendon's History, and Campbell's Lives of the Admirals.

† He fought a duel with the invincible Jermyn, on account of that "angel-devil" Lady Shrewsbury.

There is reason to believe, from various scattered notices, that this Duchess of Richmond introduced one of her nieces at court, with a view of captivating the easy affections of Charles, and counteracting, through her influence, the ascendancy of the Duchess of Portsmouth. One part of this plan appears to have succeeded, for Miss Lawson became the object of the King's admiration, whose attentions to her were so public, that they are frequently alluded to, and the Portsmouth faction was thrown into some consternation.

But it also appears, that on this occasion Charles met with very unusual resistance, and that Miss Lawson was not easily won,—if, indeed, she was won at all, of which there is no existing proof. There is a coarse political satire of that time, (about 1674,) quoted by Sir William Musgrave, in which all the celebrated beauties of the court are represented as contending for the post of *Maîtresse en titre.* Miss Lawson is mentioned among the rest; but she is rejected, by reason of her "too great modesty." There are other contemporary songs, epigrams, satires, worthless in themselves, where Miss Lawson's name occurs. She is never alluded to but as one hitherto innocent, and exposed to danger from the intrigues of her aunt, and the profligate pursuit of the King. The following passage will serve as a specimen:

"Yet, Lawson, thou whose arbitrary sway,
Our King must, more than we do him, obey,
Who shortly shall of easy Charles's breast,
And of his empire, be at once possest;
Though it indeed appear a glorious thing
To command power and to enslave a King;

Yet, ere the false appearance has betray'd
A soft, believing, unexperienced maid,
Ah! yet consider, ere it be too late,
How near you stand upon the brink of fate."*

Sir William Musgrave adds, "that the five sisters became nuns at York," and this is all that can be discovered concerning the original of this portrait. If we may believe in the existence of innocence, which even slander appears to have respected, and satire itself to have compassionated; and if we can suppose it possible that such innocence could be maintained in a corrupt court, surrounded not only by temptations, but by the most villainous snares, we ought to deem Miss Lawson acquitted, notwithstanding the evil society in which she appears.

The picture, which is by Wissing, is not in itself eminently lovely or interesting; but, as one of the Windsor Beauties, it could not well have been omitted in this collection. It is very beautifully painted; and in the face there is an expression of mildness and goodness, which agrees with the few particulars which have been collected relative to that Mrs. Lawson, whom I suppose to have been the subject of the portrait.

* Musgrave's Biographical Adversaria, MS. No. 5723, British Museum.

ATHENÆUM

Painted by Sir Peter Lely

Engraved by [illegible] Wright

Elizabeth

Countess of Chesterfield

THE COUNTESS OF CHESTERFIELD.

"Extremely mad the man I surely deem,
That weens with watch and hard restraint to stay
A woman's will, that is disposed to go astray.
It is not iron bands, nor hundred eyes,
Nor brazen walls, nor many wakeful spies,
That can withhold her wilful, wandering feet;
But fast good will and gentle courtesies."

SPENSER.

LADY ELIZABETH BUTLER, eldest daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Ormond, and sister of the gallant and accomplished Lord Ossory, was born at Kilkenny, on the 29th of June, 1640. Her birth had nearly cost the life of her excellent mother, who had scarcely recovered from the effects of a long and dangerous confinement, when the civil wars broke out: the events which followed, and which so deeply involved in their consequences the happiness and fortunes of the Ormond family, need not be related here. The childhood of Lady Elizabeth was passed in scenes of tumult and constant vicissitude, but always under the care and protection of her mother; at length, her parents were driven from their country and obliged to seek a refuge upon

the Continent, where the duchess resided for some time with her young family, principally at Caen in Normandy. The marriage between Lady Elizabeth Butler and the young Earl of Chesterfield was arranged at the Hague in 1659, and was to have taken place at the same time with that of her brother, Lord Ossory; but it appears that the duchess just at that time was obliged to give up the portion intended for her daughter, to aid the King in his necessities: the exact date of the marriage is uncertain, but it was probably solemnized at the Hague in the beginning of the year 1660.

Lady Elizabeth was then about nineteen, and the young earl in his twenty-fifth year: a marriage so suitable in age, in rank, and in personal accomplishments, was rendered miserable, by circumstances over which neither had any control.

Lord Chesterfield had previously married Lady Anne Percy, the daughter of Algernon, Earl of Northumberland: she died very young in 1654, leaving him a widower at the age of twenty. He afterwards travelled, and spent two years in the various courts of Italy; whence he returned in 1659, and received the hand of Lady Elizabeth, according to a family compact between his mother, the Countess of Chesterfield, and the Duke of Ormond. He is described by Hamilton as a handsome man, without any advantages of figure, as he was neither tall nor graceful; but the beauty of his head and features compensated for other deficiencies. He was accomplished and intelligent, skilled in riding, fencing,

dancing, and in all the exercises then thought necessary to form a complete gentleman; he was courteous to his inferiors, but haughty and ceremonious in the society of his equals. A temper, naturally inclined to jealousy and suspicion, had not been amended by a long residence in Italy: the profligacy which there prevailed universally, had subverted his own principles, and implanted in his mind certain prejudices and opinions, very derogatory to women in general. His young bride, on the contrary, had been educated in the bosom of domestic happiness; she came to him fresh from the tuition and example of an amiable and dignified mother, and she appears at first to have regarded her husband with a timid and fond admiration, which a little attention and devotion on his part, would have converted into an attachment for life. Whether he had left some Italian love beyond the Alps, or had already begun to devote himself to Lady Castlemaine, whose first and most favoured lover he is said to have been, cannot now be known. It is only certain, that he met the affection of his young and charming wife with a negligent, frigid indifference, which astonished, pained, and humiliated her: finding, however, that all her tenderness was lavished in vain, and that her attempts to win him from a rival rather increased than diminished his aversion, mingled pique and disgust seem to have succeeded to her first affection and admiration, and their conjugal arrangements were in this melancholy and unsettled state when the Restoration took place, and Lady Chesterfield accompanied her husband and her family to England.

The Duchess of Ormond was not an indifferent spectator of her daughter's domestic misery. It appears, from a very respectful and submissive letter from the earl to his mother-in-law, that she had interfered kindly but discreetly, with a hope of healing all disquiet. To reconcile himself with his wife's parents, Lord Chesterfield took her to Ireland in 1662; they spent three months at Kilkenny Castle, and there Lady Chesterfield witnessed the marriage of her sister, Lady Mary Butler, with Lord Cavendish, afterwards the first Duke of Devonshire.

The King hated Chesterfield, on account of the favour with which Lady Castlemaine had regarded him; but the earl had claims on the royal attention which could not be overlooked. On the arrival of Catherine of Braganza, he was created chamberlain of her household, and in virtue of his office was lodged in Whitehall. Thus thrown into the very midst of a gay court, Lady Chesterfield, from a neglected wife, living in privacy, and even poverty, became suddenly a reigning beauty: captivating and piquante, rather than regularly handsome, there was something in the archness and brilliance of her wit, in the elegance of her small, but perfect figure, and in the exquisite neatness of her person and dress, which distinguished her from the half-attired, languishing, flaunting beauties around her. Only Miss Hamilton rivalled her in vivacity and mental acquirements, and only Miss Stewart surpassed her in charms.

She was immediately surrounded with professed ado-

rers; and strange to tell, one of the first who sighed for her in vain was her own husband.

Lord Chesterfield found his charming wife universally admired, while the vulgarity and arrogance of Lady Castlemaine became every day more apparent and more intolerable from the force of contrast: he began to wonder, and with reason, at his own blindness and indifference to so many charms, and his passion at length rose to such a height, that, casting aside the fear of ridicule, he endeavoured to convince her, by the most public attentions, that his feelings towards her were entirely changed. Unfortunately, it was now too late: the heart he had wounded, chilled, and rejected, either could not, or would not be recalled; he found himself slighted in his turn, and treated with the most provoking and the most determined coldness. A spirit of coquetry, a dangerous love of general admiration, and all the intoxication of gratified vanity, now filled that bosom which had come to him pure, warm, and innocent, and which he had once occupied to exclusion of almost every other thought and feeling: the punishment was cruel, but scarce more than he deserved. Finding that all his advances were repelled, he was seized with jealousy and rage; he felt assured that a transition so complete, from extreme tenderness and trembling solicitude to the most perfect indifference, could only be caused by some favoured lover, and his suspicions fixed at once on the Duke of York,—not without apparent reason, for the duke's admiration of his wife had been very unequivocally displayed. But a more dangerous rival, wholly

unsuspected, existed in George Hamilton, the younger brother of Miss Hamilton, and first-cousin to Lady Chesterfield.

Hamilton, either out of contradiction, or *étourderie*, had been amusing himself and alarming all his friends, by offering his assiduities to Lady Castlemaine, then in the height of her favour and her power. But Lady Chesterfield, having in a manner opposed herself with peculiar and feminine spite to the woman who had withdrawn her husband's affections from her in the first year of her marriage, and whom she every way detested, was not content with the legitimate triumph of winning back her husband from her trammels, she resolved to deprive Lady Castlemaine of her new admirer, and to add George Hamilton to her own train of adorers. This laudable resolve was not very difficult to execute, for Hamilton was the most inflammable of men; he was only "le petit cousin," and she had constant opportunities of meeting him, either in the society of his sister, or at the apartments of his aunt, the Duchess of Ormond. He could not see with impunity one of the loveliest women of the time; he began to waver in his allegiance to Lady Castlemaine, and while he yet hesitated, one or two encouraging glances from the blue eyes of Lady Chesterfield brought him at once to her feet.

We should not forget, while reading De Grammont's Memoirs, that they were written by the brother of George Hamilton, who considered himself as a betrayed and injured lover, and whose account of Lady Chester-

field's conduct was likely to be coloured by his own exasperated feelings: notwithstanding the conspicuous figure she makes in those Memoirs, and the malicious gaiety with which her coquetry and her indiscretion are exposed, I can find no direct accusation against her virtue either there or elsewhere. Pepys, who was likely to hear all the scandal of the court, mentions her ever with respect, as "that most virtuous lady;"* yet he never speaks of her husband without some slighting expression or discreditable allusion. In the present case, Lord Chesterfield had placed himself beyond the pale of sympathy; his former treatment of his wife was so well known at court, that his jealous airs exposed him to universal ridicule.

At this time it happened that the guitar-player Francisco, (mentioned in the Introduction,) had rendered that instrument so much the fashion, that all the beauties and courtiers affected to cultivate it with enthusiasm; and in the midst of this universal *raclerie*, Lady Chesterfield was as proud of possessing the finest guitar in England, as her brother, Lord Arran, of being confessedly the best player next to Francisco himself. The Guitarist had composed a certain sarabande, which the King greatly admired and patronised; and very soon nothing but this sarabande was heard at court. The Duke of York wished to learn it from Lord Arran; and he, being resolved to give the sarabande every possible advantage, invited the duke to accompany him to his sister's apartments, that he might hear it performed on

* Pepys' Diary, vol. i.; p. 177—194.

this wonderful guitar, which was the envy of all the fair amateur players in the court.

In all this there was certainly nothing extraordinary; but Lord Chesterfield, possessed by jealousy and suspicion, saw in this rendezvous nothing less than a scheme to accomplish his dishonour. While the two musicians were practising the sarabande, and Lady Chesterfield did the honours of her celebrated guitar, her husband sat watching the trio with "jealous leer malign," and internally resolving that nothing should induce him to leave the room; but in the midst of these agreeable reflections, an order arrived from the Queen to attend her majesty immediately in his quality of Lord Chamberlain, for the purpose of introducing the Muscovite ambassadors to her presence. The unhappy earl, execrating in his secret soul all guitars, ambassadors, and officious brothers-in-law, was under the necessity of obeying the royal commands, and had not been ten minutes in the Queen's presence-chamber, when, to his confusion and dismay, he beheld the Earl of Arran standing opposite to him, and unaccompanied by the Duke of York. The moment he was released, he hastened home, and without waiting for any explanation, gave way at once to all the transports of jealous rage. The poor guitar was the first victim of his fury; it was broken into ten thousand pieces. After this exploit, the first person he met on leaving his house was George Hamilton, upon whom his suspicions had never rested for a moment; in fact, it had been Hamilton's study to persuade him that all his assiduities were di-

rected to Lady Castlemaine. To him, therefore, he confided his griefs; exaggerating the coquetry of his wife, the attentions of the duke, and the intermeddling of Lord Arran. He related at length the curious scene of the *bas verts*, when the fair Stewart, in presence of the whole court, suffered her beautiful ankle to be produced, in emulation of that of Lady Chesterfield: while the Duke of York stood aloof, refusing to admire, and declaring, with many a gallant oath, that there was "point de salut sans les bas verts." Now, as Lady Chesterfield had introduced this fashion, her husband conceived that the duke's speech could admit of but one interpretation;—Othello's handkerchief was not more conclusive. Hamilton began to think so too, and to take a more than friendly interest in the subject; and Chesterfield, imputing his indignation to a disinterested sympathy with his own wrongs, continued to pour his complaints into his ear, till Hamilton was driven to desperation. He began to suspect that Lady Chesterfield was merely trifling with him,—a supposition which, considering her character, was not improbable; and he was convinced that the Duke of York was a preferred lover, which assuredly was not a necessary consequence. In a fit of angry impatience, he advised Lord Chesterfield to carry his wife off to his country-seat. The poor countess was immediately conveyed down to Bretby by her infuriated husband, and Hamilton for awhile triumphed in his vengeance.*

* This story, which is related at length in the Memoirs of De Grammont with infinite grace and liveliness, but in a tone very unfavourable to Lady Chesterfield, is thus, with more brevity, and probably with more

The whole of the circumstances soon became public; the lady was generally pitied, and none believed that her husband had any just cause for the tyranny he had exercised on this occasion. Dorset, Etheredge, Rochester, and all the rhyming wits of the court, pursued Lord Chesterfield with showers of epigrams. The famous sarabande, which had been the first occasion of this terrible fracas, was set by the Chevalier de Grammont to new words, bitterly reflecting on the conduct of this "mari loup-garou," and soon the whole court had them by heart; they were sung universally, and, (as Count Hamilton gravely adds,) "toutes les dames les voulurent avoir pour les apprendre à leurs enfants."

Lady Chesterfield never again appeared at court; and learning to whom she was really indebted for the severity exercised towards her, (the justice of which she was far from admitting,) she vowed vengeance against

truth, narrated by honest Mr. Pepys, in his Diary. "This day, by Dr. Clarke, I was told the occasion of my Lord Chesterfield's going and taking his lady (my Lord Ormond's daughter) from court. It seems he not only hath been jealous of the Duke of York, but did find them two talking together, though there were others in the room, and the lady, by all opinions, a most good, virtuous woman. He the next day (of which the duke was warned by somebody that saw the passion my Lord Chesterfield was in the night before) went and told the duke how much he did apprehend himself wronged, in his picking out his lady in the whole court to be the subject of his dishonour; which the duke did answer with great calmness, not seeming to understand the reason of complaint; and that was all that passed: but my lord did presently pack his lady into the country in Derbyshire, near the Peake; which is become a proverb at court, to send a man's wife to the Peake when she vexes him."—p. 194.

George Hamilton, and forthwith proceeded to execute her purpose with all the cunning of an *intriguante*, and all a woman's wit and wilfulness. She penned a long and artful letter to Hamilton, gave him a most eloquent and heart-rending description of her miserable state, of the melancholy prison, surrounded by rocks, precipices, and morasses, in which she was confined; of the ruthless tyranny of her husband, now her gaoler, and of her own repentance. She informed him that the earl was under the necessity of leaving home for a week, and conjured him to seize that opportunity to visit her, and listen to her justification. Hamilton, already devoured by regrets for her absence, and remorse for his own share in causing it, received this insidious letter with transport, and fell at once into the snare. He immediately mounted his horse, and rode post down to Bretby. It was towards the close of a severe winter, and a hard frost prevailed. He passed a whole night under the windows of Bretby Hall, almost congealed with cold, without receiving the least sign of recognition or compassion. On returning to the little village inn where he was lodged incognito, he learned that Lord Chesterfield was not absent—nor likely to be so; and on looking round him he beheld, instead of a prison, a splendid palace; and instead of a horrible solitude, a magnificent and cultivated domain, which, till a recent possessor levelled its fine woods, was considered one of the most beautiful seats in England. He perceived how grossly he had been beguiled, and soon discovered that he was only the propitiatory victim in the reconciliation which had just taken place between the countess and her hus-

band. On his return to London he would willingly have suppressed the story of this luckless expedition; but Lady Chesterfield was not inclined to make a mystery of the revenge she had taken on her rash and too officious lover: the story reached the King's ears, and he insisted upon learning the details from Hamilton himself, who was called upon to relate his own ridiculous adventure in presence of the whole court; so that the lady's vengeance was in every respect complete, and, perhaps, not unmerited.

Lady Chesterfield's retirement (or banishment) took place in 1662: about a year afterwards she gave birth to a daughter, and thenceforward her time was spent entirely at Bretby, if not happily, at least irreproachably. She died in 1665, before she had completed her 25th year. Her infant daughter, Lady Elizabeth Stanhope, was educated by her grandmother, the excellent Duchess of Ormond, and afterwards married John Lyon, fourth Earl of Strathmore.

After the premature death of his beautiful and unhappy wife, Lord Chesterfield married Lady Elizabeth Dormer, and died in 1713, at the age of eighty.

There is a tradition relating to the death of Lady Chesterfield, which cannot be passed without remark, as it is to be met with in many works, and is even alluded to by Horace Walpole. It is said that her husband, having caused her to take the sacrament upon her innocence respecting any intimacy with the Duke of York,

bribed his chaplain to put poison into the sacramental cup, and that she died in consequence. This horrible accusation rests upon no proof whatever; it is only certain that it was current during the life of the earl, and even believed by some of his own family. Lord Chesterfield's son by his third wife, married Lady Gertrude Saville, daughter of the Marquis of Halifax. The marquis and the old Earl of Chesterfield quarrelled, and the latter obliged Lord Stanhope to bring his wife to Lichfield, breaking off all intercourse between the families. Lady Stanhope had always on her toilette her father's work, "Advice to a Daughter." Her father-in-law took it up one day, and wrote on the title-page, "Labour in vain." On her side the lady, not to be outdone in impertinence, made her servant, out of livery, carry in his pocket a bottle of wine, another of water, and a gold cup; and whenever she dined or supped in company with her father-in-law, either at home or abroad, she never would drink but of those liquors from her servant's hand. It was a hint to the earl and the company present, that the crime which his lordship was suspected of having perpetrated, by a sacred beverage, was full in the recollection of his daughter-in-law. The most surprising part of the story is, that the old earl endured this.

In the correspondence of this Earl of Chesterfield recently published, there are two letters to the countess in a tone more polite and sententious than affectionate. It appears certain that he never succeeded in winning back her tenderness; and he has recorded her death in

his memorandum-book, without a single remark or expression of regret.

The portrait is engraved, for the first time, after the beautiful picture by Lely, in the possession of Mr. Fountaine, of Narford. It is the same which is mentioned by Granger, and which was copied in crayons for Horace Walpole. Its authenticity is beyond a doubt.

[The following letter was written by the Duke of Ormond to his sister the Countess of Clancarty, on occasion of the death of his daughter Lady Chesterfield.

"MOORE PARK, JULY 22, 1665.

"My dear Sister,

"Nothing could give me greater assistance against the increase of misfortune by the death of my daughter Chesterfield, than to find you bear your affliction with so much constancy. It is certain that as we are born to die, that the longer we live, the more of these trials we must be subject to. The separation of friends and relations has been, and must be so frequent, that the expressions of consolating and compassionating are a road as much beaten as that of death, in which all mankind are appointed to travel. And as on other ways, so on that, some go faster than others; but he that goes slowest is sure to come to his journey's end. God of his mercy prepare us for, and prepare for us, a good reception.

"The letters which should have been sent, I now send you; if there be any thing else that may add comfort to you within my power, it will as certainly arrive to you, when it is known to

My dearest Sister,
Your most affectionate Brother and Servant,
ORMONDE."

The following letter from Elizabeth Lady Chesterfield, which may be either the earl's second or third wife, preserved in the British Museum, contains an allusion to the banishment of our heroine to the Peake. It is addressed to "Mrs. Coollpeper, at her house next dore to the Arche in Lincons inne feilds, London."

Nov. 9.

"Deare Mrs. Coollpeper,

"My women, as allsoe your letters, doe me the favour to tell me I am so happie to be in your thoughts, which I am extreme proud of, and I must still beg the continuence of it, and that I may sometimes at your best leasure heare from you, you will be obliging if you please to descant me with a little news from your world. You know Darbysher is a dull place, and needs some thing to make it pleasint. I will assure you I know nothing will please me better then hearing from you, writ whatever you will. I suppose my Lady Dencell's discretion will lett her be a little decent this winter. Pray God she be not condemnd to Darbysher at last for ever, as sume body was about ten or twelf yeare agoe,* for that pockie

* There is no date to this letter, and by the words *ten or twelf yeare*

gallant's mistress have that ill for them if they doe not behave themselves wisely, they are packed out of their heaven London. I am glad to heare my Lady Freschwell is coming to towne, because pore Moll may have somebody to hang upon besids y^e^ weake La. Northumberland. I am obligd to you for wishing me at London this winter, though I shall be more desirous of it next, for now theare are none of being theare except your good selfe. I know not whether the Grand Passer is a lover of me or noe now, haveing not sine him a long time, I thinke it is no great mater whether he be or noe, if I am not hated by you, I will be soe contented with that good fortten, that noe other things shall trouble

Your affect. humble servant,

E. CHESTERFIELD."

" Pray pardon a thoussand blotts here, for I am so neare my time that I am ill at ease, and cannot mend my faults now."

Macky observes of Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, that " he was very subtle and cunning, never entered into the measures of King William, nor ever did make any great appearance in any other reign." On which Dean Swift says, " If it be old Chesterfield, I have heard he was the greatest knave in England."—ED.]

agoe, it may probably be written by the Earl of Chesterfield's third wife, Lady Elizabeth Dormer, eldest daughter and co-heiress to Charles Earl of Caernarvon. She died in 1679.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Painted by Sir Peter Lely.

Engraved by J. Thomson.

Henrietta

Countess of Rochester

THE COUNTESS OF ROCHESTER.

" Such her beauty, as no arts
Have enrich'd with borrow'd grace;
Her high birth no pride imparts,
For she blushes in her place.
Folly boasts a glorious blood;—
She is noblest, being good."

HABINGTON.

LADY HENRIETTA BOYLE, Countess of Rochester, was the youngest daughter of Richard second Earl of Cork, and first Earl of Burlington. Her mother was the Lady Elizabeth, sole daughter and heiress of Henry Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. Thus she was the grand-daughter of that extraordinary man known in history as the GREAT Earl of Cork, who went to Ireland a needy adventurer in the reign of Elizabeth, and lived to see himself and five of his sons peers of England or of Ireland: by the mother's side she was descended from one of the proudest, most illustrious, and most powerful families among the old feudal aristocracy of England,—the Cliffords of Cumberland.

The Earl of Burlington, (for he was generally distinguished by his English title,) had been a firm Loyalist;

and at the Restoration, to which he mainly contributed, he found himself high in favour at court, to which his four daughters were immediately introduced. The eldest became Countess of Thanet, the second married the celebrated Earl of Roscommon, the third became the wife of Lord Hinchinbroke, afterwards Earl of Sandwich. The youngest, who was also the most beautiful, was sought in marriage by Laurence Hyde, the second son of Lord Chancellor Clarendon.

The marriage of Anne Hyde with the Duke of York, the power and talents of the great Chancellor, then at the height of favour, gave to the whole family of the Hydes a degree of importance and influence at court, which was increased by the connexions they formed with the first and the oldest nobility; for who would have rejected an alliance which had not been disdained by the first prince of the blood? Henry Hyde, the eldest son of the Chancellor, and afterwards Lord Cornbury, had fixed his affections on Theodosia Capel, the daughter of Arthur Lord Capel, and she became the "Madame Hyde" of De Grammont's Memoirs. Mrs. Hyde was naturally witty and lively, but from a strange sort of affectation, she fancied she should succeed better as a languishing than as a sparkling beauty: accordingly she changed her airy and swimming grace into a mincing gait, modulated her voice to the most approved drawl, and veiled her brilliant eyes so successfully, that the sleepy, elongated eyelid thenceforth became the fashion of the court. Her sister-in-law, Lady Henrietta Hyde, was by nature what Mrs. Hyde became by fashion and affectation; she was

a blonde of the most delicate description, with a profusion of fair hair, and a complexion transparently pink and white, like the Alpine berry shining through the new-fallen snow: her manners were as gentle and blameless as her face was beautiful. She was married to Laurence Hyde about the year 1663, and the utter dissimilarity between herself and her husband in character and temper, was, perhaps, the foundation of their domestic happiness.

Laurence Hyde was a man of great natural talent, improved by a careful education under the eye of his father, who had early initiated him into business, and intended him for the diplomatic service. He was handsome, with a good figure, and a dark complexion: his temper was naturally violent, but while he governed his family imperiously, he seems to have possessed the power of inspiring those around him with love as well as fear. "I never knew a man," says Lord Dartmouth,* "who was so soon put into a passion, that was so long before he could bring himself out of it, in which he would say things that were never forgot by any body but himself. He therefore had always more enemies than he thought, though he had as many professedly so as any man of his time." It might have been supposed that this warmth of temper, in which there was too much heat to be false,† and the incumbrance of a beautiful wife, who was simple enough to be content with the admiration of her husband, and to nurse her own children, were ill calculated

* In a note upon Burnet's History.

† Burnet's History.

to raise the fortunes of a man in such a court as that of Charles the Second; but polished manners, great sagacity in affairs, and his near relationship to the throne during three successive reigns, served Lord Rochester in lieu of more complying virtues, and a more accommodating wife. Notwithstanding the impeachment, disgrace, and exile of his illustrious father, which followed within a few years after his marriage with Lady Henrietta, we find Laurence Hyde, supported by his own talents and the friendship of the Duke of York, running a prosperous career. He was ambassador to John Sobieski, King of Poland in 1676, and afterwards envoy to Holland; he was First Lord of the Treasury in 1679, and in 1681 he was created a peer by the title of Viscount Hyde of Kenilworth; and in 1683, the earldom of Rochester, becoming extinct in the Wilmot family,* was conferred upon him. On the accession of James the Second he received the staff of High Treasurer, and was for some time considered as the chief favourite of the King, and at the head of all affairs.

It is perhaps the highest eulogium that could be pronounced on the character and conduct of his fair, gentle-looking, and really amiable wife, that while her husband was treading the steep and tortuous paths of court diplomacy, rising to rank and honours, and filling the highest offices in the state, we do not even hear of her, except in her domestic relations. In the recent publi-

* By the death of John Wilmot, only son of the famous, or rather notorious, Earl of Rochester.

cation of the Clarendon Papers,* Lady Rochester is seldom mentioned; but from the manner in which she is alluded to, we may infer, without danger of being mistaken, that she was the excellent and submissive wife of an impatient and despotic husband; that she lived in the utmost harmony with her children and her relatives; that she frequented the court but little; that, without possessing any striking qualities, she inspired those who were allied to her with equal respect and affection; and that her health was so delicate and precarious, as to be a subject of constant solicitude to those who loved her.†

This is all we can gather from contemporary authorities. It should seem that her days flowed along in one even course of unpretending duties and blameless pleasures; duties such as her sex and station prescribed, pleasures such as her rank and fortune permitted,—interrupted and clouded by such cares and infirmities as are the common lot of mortality. This description of Lady Rochester may appear a little insipid after the piquante adventures of a Cleveland and a Chesterfield, and others of her more brilliant and interesting contemporaries; yet there is in its repose and innocence some-

* The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, and his brother Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, edited from the original MSS.

† Thus, to give one instance from a letter of Lord Clarendon to his brother Lord Rochester; "God Almighty preserve you and my sister, and all yours. I am very much afraid lest this change should make impression on my sister's tender health; but she has seen such variety of changes in our poor family, that I doubt not her wisdom and resolution, if her strength do not fail her."—Vol. ii., p. 133.

thing that not only refreshes, but sweetens the imagination. As in a garden, where peonies, and pinks, and carnations, and tall lilies,

> "And canker blooms, with full as deep a die,
> As the perfumed tincture of the roses,"

flaunt to the eye and allure the sense, should we suddenly find a jasmine trailing its light tendrils and luxuriant foliage round a lordly elm, with what delight should we appropriate its starry, unsullied blossoms, and place them in our bosom!

During the first years of her marriage, Lady Rochester became the mother of two sons and four daughters; of these, her eldest daughter, Lady Anne Hyde, was by far the most interesting, and appears to have been the favourite of her father and mother. In 1682, they married her to the young Earl of Ossory, the grandson of the great Duke of Ormond. Very early marriages were then customary; Lord Ossory was not more than nineteen, his bride not quite fifteen, when they were united. She was beautiful, innocent, and affectionate,* but unhappily inherited her mother's delicacy of constitution; we find her praised and admired for her early wit, sense, and vivacity, nor is it any argument against the truth of this

* In the Clarendon Correspondence are two short letters, which Lady Ossory addressed to her father, about two years after her marriage. Her father, it seems, had written to her with some asperity,—perhaps under the influence of one of those moods of temper to which he was subject; and the earnest tenderness and humility with which she deprecates his anger, and professes her entire obedience, are very touching: they give us a high idea of the parental power as it was exercised in those days.

praise, that she should be subject to superstitious terrors, and a believer in dreams and divinations, in days when philosophers studied alchymy and astrology. Lady Ossory was married too young, and her sensitive, imaginative disposition seems to have preyed on her health. She died from the consequences of a second and premature confinement, at the age of eighteen.*

To die young, innocent, and beloved, is not a misfortune; it is to die half an angel;—

> "Our great good parts put wings unto our souls
> That waft them up to Heaven."

* Her death took place at Dublin Castle, January 25, 1685. Some fancies might possibly contribute to this calamity; for the young lady was impressed with the common superstitious notion, as to thirteen people sitting at table. A short time previous to her death, Dr. John Hough, (afterwards Bishop of Worcester,) was going to sit down, when, perceiving that he made the thirteenth, he stopped short and declined taking his place. She immediately guessed at his reason, and said, "Sit down, Doctor, it is now too late; it is the same thing, if you sit or go away." He believed that the circumstance affected her, as she was in very indifferent health, and had been subject for some time to hysterical and fainting fits. The poor lady's imagination seems to have been peculiarly susceptible of such impressions, for another story is related, that may perhaps have accelerated the fatal event. Upon the death of the Countess of Kildare, Lady Ossory, being then only seventeen, dreamed that some one came and knocked at her chamber-door; and that calling to her servant to see who was there, and nobody answering, she went to the door herself, and opening it, saw a lady muffled up in a hood, who drawing it aside, she saw it was the Lady Kildare. Upon this she cried out, "Sister, is it you? what makes you come in this manner?"—"Don't be frightened," replied she, "for I come on a very serious affair; and it is to tell you that you will die very soon." Such was her dream as she related it herself to Dr. Hough.

The old Duke of Ormond lamented her honestly and feelingly;* her young husband more acutely, but *he* was soon consoled.† The blow fell heaviest upon her parents;—it seems to have struck her poor mother to the earth. Among the papers of Lord Rochester, one was found containing meditations on the anniversary of his daughter's death: on recalling his own sensations, he dwells with a kind of painful astonishment on the remembrance that, during a whole week which elapsed between the death of Lady Ossory and the arrival, "by reports, by messengers, by condoling friends, of the dreadful sound of that shot, which was fired a week before;"—during this interval he had been occupied in the cares, business, and pleasures of life, *and no internal voice* had whispered to him or to the mother, that she, the beloved one, who had derived her being from them, who was, as it were, a part of their very existence, lay senseless and dead, and the life that was the joy of their's had departed from the world in which they breathed, insensible, unconscious of the stroke. How many have felt this before and since! "It pleased God," says the bereaved father, "to take her away, as it might be on this day, and I lived

* The Duke of Ormond, in a letter to Sir R. Southwell, says, "I was in great perplexity for the sickness of the young lady I brought a stranger with me into this country, which it hath pleased God to put an end to in her death. I am not courtier, that is dissembler enough, to equal hers with other losses I have sustained of the like kind; but I assure you, her kindness and observance of me, and her conduct in general, hath gained very much upon my affections, and promised so much satisfaction in her, that I am extremely sensible of her loss."

† Lord Ossory, about a year after the death of his first wife, married Lady Mary Somerset.—*Vide* Memoir of Lady Ossory, vol. i., p. 142.

on, almost a week longer, deceived in my vain expectations that I should hear better of her, and that the worst was past; till here comes the dismal news, a week after the blow was given! a week's time I had spent, after her lying cold and breathless, in the ordinary exercises of my life;—nay, I think I had wrote from hence to her after the time she was dead, with the hopes that my letter should find her better; with expressions of tenderness for the sickness she had endured; of wishes for her recovery; of hopes of being in a short time happy in her company; of joy and comfort to myself, in being designed to go to live again in the same place with her;—I say I had written all this:—to whom? to my poor dead child! Oh, sad and senseless condition of human life!" This speaks to the heart, for it is the language of the heart.

He goes on to express his grief when the calamity was made known to him, and adds, "In the midst of this I had my wife lying weak and worn with long and continual sickness, and now, as it were, knocked quite on the head with this cruel blow;—a wife for whom I had all the tenderness imaginable; with whom I had lived long and happily, and had reason to be well pleased; whose fainting heart and weak spirits I was to comfort and keep up when I had none myself!"

This tender allusion to Lady Rochester shows how much she must have suffered on this occasion; and the simple and unobtrusive testimony to her merit, still existing in the hand-writing of her husband, is worth more

than twenty sonnets in her praise, though Waller himself had penned them.

But Lord Rochester had little time for the indulgence of his own feelings, or for the consolation of others; while yet, as he expresses it, drowned in sorrow for the loss of his best child, he was hurried to attend on the spectacle of a dying monarch,—Charles the Second. Soon afterwards he was raised, by the friendship of his successor, to a more eminent and splendid station than he had yet enjoyed, and plunged into all the turmoil of politics. Lady Rochester was among those most distinguished by the new Queen,—the beautiful and amiable Maria of Modena. Burnet mentions a visit which the Queen paid to Lady Rochester when confined to a sick room: at the time of this visit, rumours were afloat that James had tampered with Lord Rochester on the subject of religion; and it was said, that as the earl was found contumacious (that is, conscientious) upon this point, the staff of Lord High Treasurer would be taken from him. Lady Rochester, it is said, attempted to deprecate this intention, and the Queen said, "that all the Protestants were turning against them, so that they knew not how they could trust any of them." To which Lady Rochester replied, "that her lord was not so wedded to any opinion, as not to be ready to be better instructed." Lady Rochester had never before meddled with politics, and this first attempt was not successful; nor, it must be owned, much to her credit: it is right to add, that it rests on very suspicious evidence—that of an enemy.

Towards the end of the year 1686, Lady Rochester, after a long interval, gave birth to a fifth daughter, and survived her confinement only a few months: she died at Bath, whither her husband had taken her for the benefit of her health, on the 12th of April, 1687: she was in her forty-second year.

The Earl of Rochester, after acting a conspicuous part in the great events of the Revolution, and the angry politics of Queen Anne's reign, died in the year 1712.

Lady Rochester left five children. Her eldest son, Henry Lord Hyde, succeeded to his father's title, and eventually to that of Clarendon.* He married the daughter of Sir William Leveson Gower, herself a celebrated beauty, and the mother of a beauty far more celebrated,—of Lady Catherine Hyde, afterwards that Duchess of Queensbury upon whom Pope and Prior have conferred an immortality, more lasting than the pencil of Lely or of Kneller could bestow on her mother and grandmother. Richard Hyde, the second son of Lady Rochester, died young on his passage to the West Indies.

Her eldest surviving daughter, Lady Henrietta, married James Earl of Dalkeith, son of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, and ancestor of the Duke of Buccleugh.

* The present Earl of Clarendon is descended from Lady Rochester in the female line.

Lady Mary Hyde married Lord Conway, ancestor of the Marquess of Hertford.

Lady Catherine, who was Maid of Honour to Queen Anne, died unmarried.

The picture from which the portrait is engraved, hangs in the Beauty Room at Windsor. It was traditionally supposed to represent the wife of Wilmot, the witty and profligate Earl of Rochester,—who, though an heiress,* was no beauty; *au contraire*,—till Horace Walpole and Granger set the matter right. It is a delicate and pleasing, but not a striking picture; the face is soft and beautiful, without any expression, and accords with the gentle and lady-like character of the original: the back-ground is well painted. The drapery, which is of the palest blue, harmonizing with the extreme delicacy of the complexion, is rather more decorous, and not less inexplicable, than Lely's draperies usually are.

[Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, was second son to the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, and was a nobleman that had had all the improvement of education and experience, with a good capacity. He was, when very young, employed by King Charles the Second in foreign negotiations; and was by King James the Second made Lord High Treasurer of England,

* *La triste Héritière* of De Grammont; she was Miss Mallet of Enmere.

knight of the Garter, and created Earl of Rochester. He opposed King William's coming to the throne, and generally thwarted the measures of the court; till the King, to gain him and his party in opposition to France, upon the breach of the Partition treaty, made him Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and a member of the cabinet; but, contrary to all expectation, he was thrown out again, yet had always a very considerable pension during that King's reign.

On Queen Anne's accession he was again made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which he soon quitted; and not being made Lord High Treasurer, which he expected, he was so disgusted, as to come no more to court.

He was easily wound up to a passion, which is the reason why he so often lost himself in the debates of the House of Peers; and the opposite party knew so well how to attack him, as to make his great stock of knowledge fail him. He was, notwithstanding, one of the finest men in England for interest, especially the church party, and was very zealous for his friends. He was of a middle stature, well shaped, and of a brown complexion.

In the year 1684, the Earl of Rochester was nominated Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the room of the Duke of Ormond; but that appointment determining with the death of his majesty, the white staff was again put into the Earl of Rochester's hands by King James II.

When he was Lord Treasurer in the reign of James

the Second, he checked as much as possible the lavish expenditure of the court; and it is said that he complained to the King of the extravagance of the Princess of Denmark, (afterwards Queen Anne); and that when James recommended her to be in future more economical, her friend Lady Churchill, afterwards the celebrated Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, exclaimed, "Ah, Madame, this is the advice of your uncle, old Rochester!" This is an anecdote which speaks much in his praise. He was never popular with any party, and by his own he appears to have been a nobleman more respected and feared than loved.

Among the original correspondence of the great Duke of Ormond, now in the possession of Mr. Colburn, are two letters from the Earl of Rochester; one to the Duke of Ormond, the other to the Duke of Beaufort, on the second marriage of the young Earl of Ossory, which seems to have followed the death of his first wife much sooner than Mrs. Jameson has stated. As neither have been printed, we are tempted to give the first.

To the Duke of Ormond, then at Bodminton.

"WHITEHALL, JULY 31, 1685.

"Though it be not long since since I waited on your Grace, and that I hope wee shall meet again very soone, I cannot omitt till then to tell you the part I take in the satisfaction I know your Grace must have, on seeing my Lord of Ossory soe well disposed off, and setled in the allyence of soe good and great a family. How tender soever this subject may be to me, you know my

thoughts very early upon it, and I doe as heartily wish you and your family all happyness in this marryage as any man liveing can doe. I pray God make the continuance of it long, and give you health and strength to the same proportion you now enjoy, to make your grandchildren the more happy. It is what I always wished for, and what I shall allways endeavour to contribute to, and will ever be, with the greatest truth and sincerity,

Your Grace's most faithfull,

and most obedient servant,

ROCHESTER."—ED.]

BC
ATH

Painted by Sir Peter Lely.

Engraved by J. Thomson.

Elizabeth Bagot.
Countess of Falmouth & Dover.

ELIZABETH BAGOT,

AFTERWARDS

COUNTESS OF FALMOUTH, AND COUNTESS OF DORSET.

"So far as doth the daughter of the day
All other lesser lights in light excel,
So far doth she in beautiful array
Above all other maidens bear the bell;
No less in virtue that beseems her well,
Doth she exceed the rest of all her race."

SPENSER.

We know far too little of Miss Bagot, since all that can be known of her only excites a wish to know more. The lovely sketch of her in De Grammont's Memoirs, the yet more beautiful and finished portrait which the pencil of Lely has bequeathed to us, are just sufficient to awaken a degree of admiration and interest, which the few particulars we can collect from other sources serve rather to increase than to gratify.

When, upon the restoration of the royal family, the clandestine union of the Duke of York and Ann Hyde was formally acknowledged by himself and sanctioned

by the King, she was of course admitted to all the privileges and honours which belonged to her as first Princess of the Blood, and wife of the heir-presumptive.* She was allowed a truly royal establishment; consisting of a Chamberlain, Master of Horse, the usual retinue of lords in waiting and pages; and, though last not least, four Maids of Honour: the choice of the latter being left entirely to herself.

Her first selection, it should seem, was not either brilliant or fortunate. The four young ladies who formed her retinue were soon dispersed different ways: some married, and some—as the Scotch say—"did *worse*."

For example; there was that laughter-loving, frolic-seeking gipsy Miss Price, who was suspected, even before her appointment, of having forfeited all claims to the title, if not to the office, of Maid of Honour. She was soon dismissed: the very *mal-à-propos* death of a

* Ann Hyde was married in 1659. Without the slightest pretensions to beauty, she had a presence so noble, and an air at once so gracious and so commanding, that Nature seems to have intended her for the rank she afterwards attained. On her elevation to the second dignity of the kingdom, she "took state upon her" as if accustomed to it from her cradle; and, as Grammont observes, held out her hand to be kissed "avec autant de grandeur et de majesté, que si de sa vie elle n'eut fait autre chose."

By her spirited conduct she obliged the Duke of York to acknowledge his marriage with her, contrary to his own intentions and the wishes of the King, and in defiance of the Queen-mother, who vowed in a rage, that whenever "that woman was brought into Whitehall by one door, she would go out of it by the other." Yet she was afterwards reconciled to the match, and acknowledged the duchess as her daughter.

lover having brought to light a certain casket of *billets doux*, all in the hand-writing of the fair Price, and the duchess having unluckily and inadvertently read aloud the two first before witnesses, found herself under the necessity of burning the remainder; and for the sake of example, and as a warning to all young ladies in the same predicament not to be found out in future, Miss Price was ordered to go and weep her lover elsewhere than in the royal ante-chamber. In spite of this dismissal, Miss Price appears to have maintained her ground in society, since we frequently hear of her afterwards; and her unscrupulous good-nature, vivacity, and knowledge of the world, rendered her a favourite at court.

The next was Miss Hobart, with whose name scandal was more malignantly busy, though not so loud. She was not handsome, but she had talents, and a turn for mischievous intrigue, which raised her up some bitter enemies. The duchess, who esteemed her, and was far too reasonable and good-natured to listen to the slanders she could not silence, removed Miss Hobart from her post of Maid of Honour, and placed her immediately about her own person, and under her own protection, as her woman of the bed-chamber.

The third of these damsels was Henrietta Maria Blagg;* "*La Blague aux blonde paupières*" of De Gram-

* She was the daughter of Colonel Blagg, or Blague, of the county of Suffolk. Her sister, so often mentioned in Evelyn's Memoirs, was a most amiable and accomplished woman, and afterwards the wife of the first Lord Godolphin.

mont's Memoirs. She was the same to whom Miss Hamilton, in the spirit of mischievous frolic, sent the *gants de Martial* and the lemon-coloured ribbons, in order to set off to more advantage the flaxen ringlets and *fade* complexion of this most fair, most insipid, and silly of coquettes. After figuring in her lemon-coloured coiffure at that famous court-ball which has already been described in the Memoirs of Miss Hamilton, and making two or three attempts to rival Miss Price,—who carried off one of her lovers, and, at the wicked instigation of Miss Hamilton, did her best to carry off another,—Miss Blagg resigned her maiden office in the duchess's court, and it is to be hoped her coquetry also, and married Sir Thomas Yarborough, a Yorkshire baronet, as singularly fair as herself; to show the world, says Hamilton, "Ce que produirait une union si blafarde."

The fourth was Miss Bagot, the subject of the present Memoir, and the only one of the number who had any real pretensions to sense and beauty.

Elizabeth Bagot was the daughter of Colonel Hervey Bagot, third son of Sir Hervey Bagot, Baronet, one of the ancestors of the present Lord Bagot. Her mother, Dorothea Arden, of the Ardens of Park Hall, in Warwickshire, died in 1649, leaving an only daughter, an infant. Colonel Bagot, soon after the death of his first wife, married Elizabeth Rotheram, who made an affectionate and careful step-mother.

The whole family of the Bagots had adhered to the

party of Charles the First, and had suffered more or less in the royal cause. Colonel Hervey Bagot had particularly distinguished himself by his chivalrous loyalty, and his defence of Lichfield: these claims were not overlooked like those of many others. On the Restoration, he became one of the Gentlemen-pensioners of Charles the Second, and his daughter Elizabeth was appointed Maid of Honour to the Duchess of York.

She had hitherto been brought up in retirement, but we have no particulars of her life or education before she first appeared at court in 1661, and immediately fixed attention. Her beauty was the more striking, because it was of a style and character very unusual in England. She was a brunette, with fine regular features, black eyes, rather soft than sparkling, and a well-proportioned figure on a large scale: her dark but clear complexion was, upon the slightest emotion, suffused with crimson; so that, as Hamilton says so gracefully, "Elle rougissait de tout sans rien faire dont elle eût à rougir."

So lovely a creature must have moved among her companions like a being of another sphere, and hardly required the *fadeur* of Miss Blagg, or the vulgarity of Miss Price, as foils to her superior charms. Charles Berkeley, Earl of Falmouth, after sighing awhile in vain for Miss Hamilton, turned to Miss Bagot, as the only one who could compete with her in beauty,—who was not so highly gifted in mind as to have a right to be fastidious,—who had not wit enough to make her lovers

her jest,—and, with her soft dark eyes and varying blushes, did not look like one who could reduce a suitor to despair.

Falmouth was young, brave, and handsome; he had been one of the faithful companions of the Duke of York in his exile, and by him introduced to the King: he soon became the declared favourite of both, and a sharer in all their profligate adventures. He had done every thing in his power to prevent the acknowledgment of the duke's marriage with Ann Hyde, which he regarded as disgraceful to his patron: he even went so far as to traduce her infamously, but was afterwards obliged to retract the unmanly slander. This offence the duchess magnanimously forgave, but her father, Lord Clarendon, as bitterly avenged, by leaving us in his history a most odious portrait of Berkeley, whom he describes as "a young man of a dissolute life, and prone to all wickedness in the judgment of all sober men..... One in whom few men had ever seen any virtue or quality which they did not wish their best friends without."*

But whatever might have been Lord Falmouth's vices and follies in the opinion of all sober men, it is not likely that he would be judged with severity in a court where he was all-powerful,—where profligacy, so far from being a fault, was a proof of loyalty if not of wit, and the received distinction of a real cavalier,—where, neither by the King nor any one else apparently, except Miss Hamilton, "had he ever been denied what he asked, either

* Clarendon's Life.

for himself or others." It is no great imputation on Miss Bagot's sense or taste that she should be dazzled by the personal advantages of Lord Falmouth, and excuse or disbelieve many faults in one who was bent to please her, and who possessed so many powers of pleasing. We find therefore, without surprise, that she soon exchanged the title of Maid of Honour for that of Countess of Falmouth. This marriage, which must have taken place about 1663, did not remove Lady Falmouth from the court she had previously adorned, but merely placed her in a more conspicuous and exalted rank; and for a year and a half she shone in that gay sphere, an object of admiration and envy. We have also reason to believe that she was, at this period of her life, a beloved and happy wife as well as a worshipped beauty; for, whatever might be the faults of Lord Falmouth, his attachment to her must have been passionate and disinterested, since she had no portion, and there was scarce an unmarried woman of any rank or fortune that would have rejected his suit. Perpetual constancy, perhaps, had been too much to expect from a man of his temperament and morals; but he was not long enough her husband to forget to be her lover. Rich in all the gifts of nature and fortune, young and thoughtless in the gayest of courts, "round like the ring that made them one, the golden pleasures circled without end,"—that is, for a few short months, for so long did this eternity of happiness endure, and no longer. In 1665, Lord Falmouth, partly from a wish to distinguish himself, and partly from an attachment to the Duke of York, volunteered, with many other young noblemen and gentle-

men, to serve on board the fleet in the first Dutch war. The engagement off Harwich, called in history the *great* sea-fight, being one of the most memorable of our naval victories, took place on the 3rd of June, 1665. The Earl of Falmouth, who was on board the Royal Charles, the duke's ship, and standing close to his royal highness in the thick of the fight, was struck dead by a cannon-ball. The same shot killed Lord Muskerry and young Boyle, the son of the Earl of Burlington. The duke escaped, but was covered with the blood of his devoted friends. This great victory, like many others, had no permanent results, and was most dearly bought. It threw many of the first families in the kingdom into mourning: "But no sorrow," says Clarendon, "was equal—at least no sorrow so remarkable, as the King's was for the Earl of Falmouth. They who knew his majesty best, and had seen how unshaken he had stood in other very terrible assaults, were amazed at the floods of tears he shed upon this occasion;"* and it is said that the Duke of York deemed the glory he had gained in this action, and even his own safety, dearly purchased by the loss of his young favourite.

When princes mourn, they mourn in public; when widows mourn,—they sometimes mourn in public too;

* "The King, it seems, is much troubled at the fate of my Lord Falmouth: but I do not meet with any man else that so much as wishes him alive again, the world conceiving him a man of too much pleasure to do the King any good, or offer any good advice to him. But I hear of all hands he is confessed to have been a man of great honour, that did show it in this his going with the duke, the most that ever man did."—*Pepys' Diary*, vol. i., page 344.

but Lady Falmouth does not appear to have done so, for we hear nothing of *her* grief. The best proof we have of the reality of her sorrow is, that her name does not appear in any of the contemporary memoranda for two or three years: during this time she seems to have lived retired from the court, or at least to have taken but little share in its amusements. Towards the end of the year 1667, there was a report that she was engaged to marry young Henry Jermyn, one of the heroes of De Grammont's Memoirs; but she escaped a union with this notorious coxcomb, and the next we hear of her is her marriage with the celebrated Earl of Dorset.

The earl, when only Lord Buckhurst, had passed a youth even more dissolute and extravagant than that of Lord Falmouth. Like him, he had volunteered in the sea-fight of 1665, and like him had distinguished himself by his light-hearted bravery; but in one respect more fortunate than his predecessor, he lived long enough to redeem his youthful extravagances, and instead of being remembered as a mere man of wit and pleasure, he has left a brilliant reputation as an accomplished gentleman, a patron of letters, the most honest and disinterested courtier, and most consistent statesman of that day. His marriage with the widow of Lord Falmouth could not have been one of interest, since she had no fortune but her pension from the King; and to have been the choice of such a man as the Earl of Dorset, when he must have been nearly forty and she herself upwards of thirty, is a fair argument that neither the beauty nor the reputation of the lady had been impaired during her long widowhood.

The Countess of Dorset died in 1684, leaving no children by either of her husbands. After her death, Lord Dorset married Lady Mary Compton, daughter of the Earl of Northampton, a woman celebrated in her time for her virtue, beauty, and accomplishments.

This portrait of Miss Bagot, which is now engraved for the first time, is from a picture by Lely, in the possession of Earl Spencer. It is one of the chief ornaments of the splendid gallery at Althorpe, and certainly one of the finest of all Lely's female portraits. It is so full of expression and character, and coloured with such uncommon power and richness of effect, as to remind us of Vandyke. The landscape in the back-ground is particularly fine: the cannon-ball which she poises in her lap as though it were a feather, we must suppose to be merely metaphorical, and allusive to the death of her first husband. From the introduction of this emblem, the pensive air of the head, and the shade of sorrow which is thrown over the features, we may suppose this fine picture to have been painted in the interval between her first and second marriage.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Painted by Wissing. Engraved by J. Thomson.

Mrs Nell

MRS. NOTT.

Would that this fair, sentimental, Madonna-like creature could speak, and tell us who and what she was! The pencil has immortalized a lovely face, tradition has preserved a name; and must we be satisfied with these? Is there no power in conjuration to make those ruby lips unclose and reveal all we long to know? Are they for ever silent? The soul that once inhabited there, that looked through these mild eyes, the heart that beat beneath that modest vest,—are they fled and cold? and of all the thoughts, the feelings, the hopes, the joys, the fears, the "hoard of unsunn'd griefs" that once had their dwelling there, is this—this surface—where beauty yet lives "clothed in the rainbow tints of heaven," but mute, cold, impassive—all that remains? Why should the vices of a Castlemaine, the frailties of a Nell Gwynn be remembered, and their evil manners live in brass, while the virtues which might have been opposed to them have been "written in water?" Is it not a pity that Fame, that daughter of the skies, should, in the profligate times of Charles, have caught something of the contagion around her, and, like other fair ladies, have laid

aside her celestial attributes, to sink into the veriest scandal-loving gossip that ever haunted a card-table? When she put her trumpet to her mouth, at every blast a reputation fell; and the malignant echoes, instead of dying away in whispers, have been repeated from generation to generation. They who were a shame to their sex have been chronicled to all time; but she who was chaste as ice,

> "Or the white down of heaven, whose feathers play
> Upon the wings of a cold winter gale,
> Trembling with fear to touch th' impurer earth,"

she whom Calumny spared, Fame neglected; a species of injustice, for which the said *Dame renommée* deserves to have her trumpet broken, and her wings stripped from her shoulders.

But then, it may be asked, is not the praise that waits on feminine virtue far too delicate to be trusted to such a brazen vehicle? more fitted to the poet's lyre than the trumpet of fame? And is it not better, while gazing on that beautiful face, which looks all innocence, to lose ourselves in delightful fancies and possibilities which none can disprove, rather than trace the brand of vulgar scandal on that brow,—scandal which we cannot refute, nor those soft, sealed lips repel? Is it not better to admire we know not who, than turn away with disgust, as we do from the portraits of a Shrewsbury or a Southesk, whose beauty shocks us like the colours of an adder? This fair creature, with her veil, and her book, and her flowers, and the little village church in the back-ground, looks far too good and demure for a Maid

of Honour,—I mean for a Maid of Honour of Charles's court; for, Heaven forbid that we should reflect on the honourable virginity of our own days! and yet the whole of the information which has been obtained amounts to this; that Mrs. Nott was one of the Maids of Honour to Queen Catherine, and nothing more can be known of the original. As for the picture, it is some satisfaction to know, while we gaze upon it, that slander has never breathed upon those features to sully them to our fancy; that sorrow, which comes to all, can never come there; that she shall keep her lustrous eyes, while those which now look upon her are closed for ever; and smile, still smile on, for other ages—"in midst of other woes than ours;" and this is something to dwell upon with pleasure, when all the rest is silence.

The portrait has always been one of the most admired of all the Windsor Beauties, and is painted with great sweetness and truth of colouring. The drapery is crimson, relieved with a white veil. The vase of flowers in the back-ground is finished with a delicacy worthy of Verelst.

[This "Madonna-like creature" was a Stanley of Kent, the wife of a gentleman of the name of Notts, whose family had been of gentilitial rank for a generation or two in the city of Canterbury.

Her history appears not to be much known. She was a distant cousin of the famous and lovely Lady Venetia

Stanley, the mistress of the Earl of Dorset, and the incomparable wife of that character "great in all numbers," Sir Kenelm Digby. Probably Mrs. Nott was introduced at court by George Digby, Earl of Bristol; and she might have been an early and youthful friend of his daughter, Lady Anne Digby, Countess of Sunderland. Her name has had the good fortune to escape being recorded in the *Chroniques scandaleuses* of the day, and therefore we are bound to think that she was a pure and virtuous lady.—Ed.]

BOS
ATHEN

Painted by Sir Peter Lely. *Engraved by B. Holl.*

Anne

Countess of Strafford

THE COUNTESS OF SOUTHESK.

" How should woman tell
Of woman's shame, and not with tears?—She fell!"

MRS. HEMANS.

WHEN the accompanying portrait was first copied and engraved for publication, it was supposed to represent Frances Brooke, Lady Whitmore, the younger sister of Lady Denham; by which name the portrait has been traditionally known in the gallery at Windsor. But on examining the duplicate which exists at Narford, in the possession of Mr. Fountaine, and referring to the authority of Horace Walpole and Granger, there can be little doubt that it represents a woman much more notorious, Anne, Countess of Southesk. By this title the picture has always been distinguished at Narford since the days of Sir Andrew Fountaine, the first possessor, and the cotemporary of the original; and by this name it was recognised as an original by Horace Walpole. The copy made in crayons by his order, is now at Strawberry Hill, and noted in his catalogue as that Lady Southesk, who figures so disgracefully in De Grammont's Memoirs.

To take up the history of this woman seriously, would be a waste of indignation: the little that is known of her we could wish to be less—and it shall be told as gently as possible.

Lady Anne Hamilton was the eldest daughter of William second Duke of Hamilton, who, like all his family, was distinguished in the civil wars for his devoted and chivalrous loyalty. He lost his life at the battle of Worcester, fighting for an ungrateful and worthless King; and his wife Lady Elizabeth Maxwell, (the daughter of the Earl of Dirletown,) whom he had married very young in 1638, was left a widow, with four daughters,—the eldest, Lady Anne, being then about eleven years old.

Where she spent her younger years,—how and by whom she was educated, cannot now be ascertained. The early loss of her noble father seems to have been her first misfortune, and the cause of all the faults, follies, and miseries which succeeded. The Duke of Hamilton had been distinguished in the court of Charles the First for his accomplishments and integrity; he was so remarkable for his love of truth, that it was said "that candour seemed in him not so much the effect of virtue as of nature, since from his infancy upwards he had never been known to lie on any temptation whatever." Burnet, who gives this testimony to the noblest and first of virtues, adds, that he was "handsome, witty, considerate, brave, and generous."* He married young, against his own inclinations, and merely in obedience to the wishes

* History of the Dukes of Hamilton.

and views of his brother, whom he idolized;* but being married, he became an exemplary husband and father, and the gentle virtues of Lady Elizabeth appear to have won at length his entire confidence and affection. In a letter addressed to his wife on the eve of the battle of Worcester, he gives her the most endearing appellations that tenderness and sorrow could dictate in such a moment: "I recommend to you," he says, "the care and education of our poor children: let your great work be to make them early acquainted with God and their duty, and keep all light and idle company from them." After his death this letter was found in his pocket-book, stained with his blood. How far his last and most affecting adjuration was attended to by his widow, we do not know; but we know that in the case of one of his children it proved fruitless.

The death of her father was not only an irreparable misfortune to Lady Anne, as it deprived her of a guardian and monitor, but it made an essential difference in her worldly prospects: although the titles and estates of the Hamilton family were transmitted in the female line, she was passed over, and the honours devolved on her cousin, the eldest daughter of James the first Duke of Hamilton, who became Duchess of Hamilton in her own right, while Lady Anne was destined to comparative insignificance. Still the high rank and virtues of her father, and

* His brother was James first Duke of Hamilton, beheaded by the Parliament during the civil wars. There is a portrait and memoir of William Duke of Hamilton, the father of Lady Southesk, in Lodge's Portraits of Illustrious Persons.

the irreproachable conduct of her mother, render it difficult to account for the unguarded situation in which she was early placed, and her degenerate lapse from the virtues of her family. The very first notice we have of Lady Anne Hamilton, when she could not be more than eighteen, exhibits her as the friend and companion of Lady Castlemaine, (then Mrs. Palmer,) and not only involved, as her confidante, in her intrigue with Lord Chesterfield, but most probably at the same time the object of his attentions.* She was then apparently a beautiful giddy flirt, prepared by the lessons and example of Lady Castlemaine for every species of mischief; and there is too much reason to believe, that when she attracted the notice of Lord Carnegie, the eldest son of the Earl of Southesk, she had ceased to be worthy of the hand or name of any man delicate on the score of female propriety, or jealous of his own honour.

The family of Carnegie (or Kerneguy,) is now, I believe, extinct in all its branches. It was then one of the oldest in Scotland, and traced its origin to a noble Hungarian, who was naturalized in the country in the reign of Malcolm Canmore. James Carnegie, second Earl of Southesk, was a loyal and devoted adherent to the fortunes of Charles the First, and is also honourably mentioned for his general worth and integrity; his son Robert, Lord Carnegie, spent several years on the Continent, and during the government of Cromwell resided at Paris, where he was much distinguished by Louis XIV., who gave him a commission in the Scots Guards.

* Vide Correspondence of Philip second Earl of Chesterfield.

He is described as a man of fine natural parts and graceful manners, improved by travelling ;* but under these superficial advantages he concealed deep, dark, malignant passions, and a temper at once dissembling and vindictive: he had, besides, a predilection for bull-baiting, for the bear-garden, and the cock-pit, which we cannot reconcile with our ideas of an accomplished gentleman, even of that day. His marriage with Lady Anne Hamilton was celebrated soon after the Restoration; but the date is not mentioned in any of the old peerages.

After her appearance at court, Lady Carnegie plunged at once into every species of dissipation; nor did the birth of two sons in the first years of her marriage, check the career of thoughtless levity, and worse than levity, to which she abandoned herself. Her husband, meantime, was not gifted with the patience of a martyr; and though jealousy was not the fashion in Charles the Second's time, Lord Carnegie, the courtier, the travelled man of the world, after having committed the folly of marrying a wild, vain, unprincipled girl, had the still greater folly to be jealous of his wife, and to betray it to the scoffing court. While he was smarting under a thousand agonies,—not indeed doubting his dishonour, but only uncertain which of his wife's numerous admirers he should select for the especial object of his hatred and vengeance,— he was summoned down to Scotland to attend the death-bed of his father; and while he was thus engaged, Lady Car-

* Vide Douglas's Scottish Peerage.

negie seized the opportunity to add the Duke of York to the list of her lovers.

During her husband's absence, she appears to have so far braved opinion, as to exhibit her royal captive every where in open triumph; but in a few weeks Lord Carnegie re-appeared with the title of Earl of Southesk, an accession of dignity which his fairer half would most willingly have dispensed with, if she could also have dispensed with his very incommodious return. It now became necessary to keep some measures of decency, and the duke never visited her without being accompanied by some of the gentlemen of his retinue, by way of form. On one of these occasions he was attended by his Irish friend, Dick Talbot,* then only distinguished for his loyalty, his love of pleasure, his reckless good-nature, and hair-brained precipitancy.

While the duke was conversing with Lady Southesk, Talbot was placed at a window, as sentinel. He had not been there many minutes, before a carriage drew up at the door, and out stepped the husband. Talbot knew him well as Lord Carnegie; but having just returned from abroad, he had no idea that his former companion had lately changed his name—no recollection of his hereditary title; and it never occurred to him that the Lady Southesk, whom his patron was entertaining, was the wife of his old friend Carnegie. On seeing him alight, he flew to prevent his entrance, telling him with a significant laugh, and a warm shake of the hand, that if he

* Afterwards Duke of Tyrconnel.

too was come to visit the beautiful Lady Southesk, he had only to go seek amusement elsewhere; for that the Duke of York was just then engaged in paying his compliments to the lady, and had placed him there expressly to prevent any *mal-à-propos* interruption.

Southesk, instead of forcing his way into his own house, and avenging on the spot his injured honour, was so utterly confounded by the cool impudence and obvious blunder of the unlucky Talbot, that he suffered himself to be fairly turned out by the shoulders, and sneaked off with a submission, partly the effect of surprise, partly of policy; for he had not courage to brave openly the heir-presumptive to the crown. The history of this ludicrous adventure was speedily spread through the whole court; it became the subject of ballads, lampoons, and epigrams innumerable, and covered the unfortunate earl with a degree of contempt and ridicule, which added to his shame and despair.

Yet even this public exposure and its consequences did not banish Lady Southesk from society: she continued for some years to haunt the court: she sought at the gaming-table a relief from ennui, and endeavoured to conceal by art the ravages which dissipation, rather than time, had made in her once lovely face. Pepys mentions her, among the beauties of the day, as parading her charms in the park and the theatre; and to use his own coarse, but forcible expression, "*devilishly* painted." Her latter years were embittered by sorrows, against which a woman's heart, however depraved, is seldom entirely

hardened. In her days of triumphant beauty, she had neglected her children; and in age they became her torment. Her eldest son, Lord Carnegie, treated her with coldness, and seemed to enter into his father's wrongs and feelings towards her; her youngest and favourite son, William Carnegie, a youth of great beauty of person and splendid talents, was killed in a duel at the age of nineteen. He had been sent to Paris to complete his education, and there meeting with young Tallemache, the son of the Duchess of Lauderdale,* they quarrelled about a profligate actress; and in this unworthy cause William Carnegie perished, in the spring and blossom of his years.

Lady Southesk died before her husband, and did not long survive the loss of her son, which occurred in 1681; but the date of her death is not mentioned. Lord Southesk died in 1688, and was succeeded by his son Charles, Lord Carnegie, who, like all his family, was devotedly attached to the house of Stuart. After the Revolution he never visited the English court, but continued to reside in Scotland, either at Kinnaird in Forfar, or at the Castle of Leuchars, the ancient seats of his family. He died in 1699, and left a son, the fifth and last Earl of Southesk.

Lady Southesk had three sisters, who all married in Scotland, and apparently passed their lives there. The eldest, Lady Elizabeth Hamilton, became Countess of Glencairn; Lady Mary married Lord Calendar; and

* She was Countess of Dysart in her own right.

Lady Margaret became the wife of William Blair, of Blair.

This picture is not very brilliantly or powerfully painted; the girlish and almost rustic simplicity of the face, and the demure colour of the drapery, which is of a dark lavender tint, strangely belie the character of the woman to whom it is here attributed; but for reasons already stated, I have little doubt that it is really the portrait of the Countess of Southesk.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Painted by Huysman. *Engraved by T. Wright*

Susan
Lady Bellasyse

SUSAN ARMINE,

LADY BELLASYS.

"BONNE ET BELLE ASSEZ."

Motto of the Belasyse family.

THIS picture, which is the most striking and splendid of the whole series known as the Windsor Beauties, is, unhappily, one of the disputed portraits. At Windsor it is traditionally known as Elinor Lady Byron;* but,

* Elinor Needham, daughter of Lord Kilmurrey, married at eleven years old to Peter Warburton, Esq., who died before she was fifteen, and after his death the wife of the first Lord Byron, is described in Sir Peter Leycester's *Antiquities of Chester*, as "a person of such comely carriage and presence, handsomeness, sweet disposition, honour, and general respect in the world, that she hath scarce left her equal behind." But Sir Peter was personally the friend of the lady, and connected with her family, and his testimony is rather incorrect and partial. The fact is, that this Lady Byron became, after the death of her husband, the mistress of Charles II. during his exile; and, avarice being her ruling passion, she contrived to extort from him, even in the midst of his distresses, upwards of 15,000*l.* in money and jewels, &c. She was dismissed for the sake of Lady Castlemaine, before the King's return, and died at Chester, within two years after the Restoration. It is not very probable that the

on the authority of Horace Walpole, Granger, and Sir William Musgrave, all three well versed in the biography of our peerage, as well as in pictorial and domestic antiquities, it is generally supposed to represent Susan Armine, "the widow of Sir Henry Bellasys, and mistress of the Duke of York."*

Methinks, if this magnificent-looking creature could speak, she would certainly exclaim against this last disreputable and unmerited title, or insist that it should be understood with a reservation in her favour: but since those lips, though stained with no "Stygian hue," are silenced by death, and can only *look* their scorn, we must plead, in defence of Lady Bellasys, that if the circumstances of her life gave some colour to the slander which has been unadvisedly stamped on her fair, open brow, she estimated, as a woman ought to estimate, her own and her sex's honour.

portrait of this lady should find its way into the Gallery of court Beauties of the time of Charles II. It may be added, that the picture has been attributed by some to Vandyke, by others to Lely, by others to Huysman. If Lady Byron sat to Vandyke, it must have been in her childhood; if to Lely or to Huysman, it must have been abroad, or after the Restoration, both circumstances equally improbable. Among the family pictures at Tabley, (the seat of the Leycesters,) there is a very fine full-length portrait, nearly resembling this at Windsor: it is there entitled Lady Byron, and attributed to Lely. On the whole it is quite impossible to reconcile the very contradictory evidence relative to the person and the picture, but by attributing the portrait at once to Lady Bellasys, on the most probable grounds and the most credible testimony.

* Horace Walpole, Anecdotes of Painting; Granger's Biographical History of England; and Musgrave's MS. notes to Granger, British Museum.

Susan Armine was the daughter of Sir William Armine, of Osgodby, in Lincolnshire. Her mother, Mary Talbot, was a niece of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and a lady distinguished in her time for her various learning, as well as for her gentle and feminine virtues and extensive charities.* It appears that Susan Armine was their only child and heiress, and that she was married very young, according to the fashion of those times, to Henry Bellasys, the son and heir of Lord Bellasys, and nephew of Lord Fauconberg.† Lord Bellasys, who had greatly signalized himself in the royal cause, became, after the Restoration, the friend and favourite of the Duke of York; and his son Henry was created a knight of the Bath, in recompense for his own gallantry and his father's loyalty.

From the few particulars which have been preserved relating to Sir Henry Bellasys, we may pronounce him to have been eminently brave and generous, but of a rash and fiery disposition. His headlong impetuosity first involved him in a luckless mistake, which led to the murder of an innocent man,‡ and afterwards occasioned his own death, in the prime of life, and within a few years after his marriage. The circumstances, which form, perhaps, the severest satire against duelling that

* Lady Armine died in 1674. It is said that she founded three hospitals for the sick and the poor, one of which (at Burton Grange, in Yorkshire,) still exists.

† In the reign of Charles II. the name was spelt indifferently Bellasses and Bellasys, but more recently Belasyse. The title of Fauconberg became extinct within the last few years.

‡ See Pepys, vol. i., p. 133.

ever was penned, and might well excite a smile but for the tragical result, are thus related:—Sir Henry, after a late revel, was conversing apart with his dear and sworn friend Tom Porter, then Groom of the Chamber to the King. As they spoke with animation, and rather loud, some one standing by asked if they were quarrelling? "Quarrelling?" exclaimed Sir Henry, turning round; "no! I would have you to know that I never quarrel but I strike!"—"How!" said Porter, "strike! I would I could see the man that dare give me a blow!" Sir Henry, flushed with recent intemperance, and only sensible to the defiance implied in these words, instantly struck him. They drew, of course, but were immediately separated by their friends. Porter left the house, and meeting Dryden, told him, in a wild manner, what had just passed, and that he must fight Sir Henry Bellasys presently; for if he waited till the morrow, he "knew they would be friends again, and the disgrace of the blow would rest upon him." He borrowed Dryden's servant, whom he ordered to watch for Sir Henry, and give him notice which way he went. He then followed his carriage, stopped it in Covent-Garden, and called on his friend to alight. They drew their swords, and fought on the spot, some of their acquaintance and others looking on; till Sir Henry Bellasys, finding himself severely wounded, staggered, and had nearly fallen, but sustaining himself by an effort, he called to Tom Porter, and desired him to fly. "Tom," said he affectionately, "thou hast hurt me; but I will make a shift to stand on my legs till thou mayst withdraw, for I would not have thee troubled for what thou hast done!" He then kissed and

embraced him: but Porter, unable to speak, could only show him that he too was wounded, and bleeding. In this state they were carried home. Sir Henry Bellasys died of his wounds within four days after the encounter; and thus, in consequence of a foolish and drunken outrage, perished a young man of high hopes, noble birth, generous feeling, and approved gallantry, by the hand of the man he most loved, and for whom he would willingly have shed his blood. This extraordinary duel, which even then excited more ridicule than sympathy,* occurred in 1667.

Of Lady Bellasys, married so young, and so early left a widow, we do not hear at this time. She was the mother of one son, an infant; and it appears that she lived in retirement for some years after the death of her husband. It was about the year 1670 that she was first distinguished at court,—not so much for her beauty, as for her wit, her vivacity, her high spirit and uncommon powers of mind. These qualities fascinated the Duke of York. It was said of him, that he was as indifferent to beauty as Charles was to virtue and intellect in woman. Some of the ladies whom the duke most admired were so homely, that the King used to aver, that the priests had inflicted his brother's mistresses on him by way of penance. It is, however, certain that those women whom the duke selected as the peculiar objects of his homage, do rather more honour to his taste, than the

* "It is pretty to hear how all the world doth talk of them, and call them a couple of fools, who killed each other for pure love."—Pepys.

favourites of Charles do to his: Lady Denham, Arabella Churchill, Miss Sedley, Lady Bellasys, to say nothing of Miss Hamilton and Miss Jennings, whom he also passionately admired and vainly pursued, are proofs that something like education and refinement were necessary to attract his attention, and something like wit and understanding to keep him awake. Lady Bellasys, who had virtue and spirit as well as wit and bright eyes, gained a strong influence over his mind without compromising her own honour; and after the death of the first Duchess of York, in 1672, he actually placed in her hands a written contract of marriage, only requiring secrecy, at least for a time. This affair coming to the knowledge of the King some months afterwards, he sent for his brother, and rebuked him very severely, telling him that "at his age it was intolerable that he should think to play the fool over again," alluding to his former marriage with Anne Hyde. But neither the threats of the King, nor the arguments and persuasions of Lord Bellasys, her father-in-law, who thought himself obliged, in honour and duty, to interfere, could, for a long time, induce Lady Bellasys to give up this contract of marriage, and brand herself with dishonour. She yielded, at length, when the safety and welfare of the duke and the peace of the nation were urged as depending on her compliance; but even then, only on condition that she should be allowed to keep an attested copy in her own possession; to which they were obliged, though most reluctantly, to consent. In return for this concession, Lady Bellasys was created, in 1674, a peer-

ess for life, by the title of Baroness Bellasys of Osgodby, having succeeded, on the death of her father and mother, to the family estates.

It is said that the Duke of York, who seems to have loved Lady Bellasys as well as he could love any thing, made many attempts to convert her to his own religion, but in vain. It was even supposed that there was some danger of the lady converting her royal lover; a suspicion which raised a strong party against her among the duke's Roman Catholic dependants, and led to much of the slander from which her name and fame have suffered.

About ten years after these events, Lady Bellasys married a gentleman of fortune, whose name was Fortrey, of whom we know nothing but that she survived him. Her son, Henry Bellasys, succeeded in 1684 to the title and estates of his grandfather, as Lord Bellasys of Worlaby, and died about the year 1690: he married Anne Brudenell, a beautiful woman, and sister of the celebrated Countess of Newburgh, Lord Lansdowne's *Mira*. She afterwards married Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond; and from her the present duke is descended.

It is to be inferred, from a letter of Swift to Mrs. Dingley, (or rather to *Stella*,) that Lady Bellasys appeared again at court in the reign of Queen Anne, and from this daughter of her former lover she received every mark of distinction and respect. She died on the 6th of January, 1713, bequeathing her rich inheritance

among her nearest kinsmen: Lord Berkeley of Stratton was appointed the executor of her will, with a legacy of ten thousand pounds.

Horace Walpole, in allusion to this portrait, thinks it probable that Charles, by admitting Lady Bellasys into the gallery at Windsor, meant to insinuate the superiority of his own taste over that of his brother; if so, he has not assuredly taken the best means of proving it, since every other face, however regular and beautiful, appears insipid when placed in contrast with this noble creature,—Miss Hamilton's, perhaps, alone excepted.

Lady Bellasys is here represented as St. Catherine. Her left hand rests on the wheel, and supports the palm branch; her right hand is pressed to her bosom. The drapery, which is dark blue and crimson, falls round her in grand and ample folds, and is coloured with exceeding richness. In the back-ground two cherubs are descending to crown her with myrtle, and she turns her large dark eyes towards them with an expression of rapturous devotion. Her jet black hair, falling from beneath a coronet of gems, flows in ringlets upon her neck; and this peculiarity, as well as the uncovered amplitude of the bosom and shoulders, seems to refer the portrait to the time of Charles II. On a critical examination of the features, we are obliged to allow the absence of beauty; the contour of the face is not perfect, and the nose and mouth are rather irregular in form; but then, as a certain French cardinal said of his mistress, "*c'est au moins, la plus belle irregularité du monde*,"—and the eyes and

brow are splendid. They have all the life and vivacity which Burnet attributes to this *intractable* lady, as he styles her.* There is so much of poetry and feeling in the composition of this picture; so much of intellectual grandeur in the turn of the head; such a freedom and spirit in the mechanical execution; and such a rich tone of colour pervading the whole, that the portrait might be assigned at once to Vandyke, if other circumstances did not render it improbable. It bears no traces of the style of Sir Peter Lely, and I am inclined to agree with Horace Walpole, who attributes it decidedly to Huysman. Huysman was the pupil of Vandyke, and he may have painted this picture in the early period of his residence in England, and before he quitted the powerful and spirited style of his former master, to imitate the effeminate graces of Lely. There is at Gorhambury, in the possession of Lord Verulam, a portrait of Queen Catherine, indisputably by Huysman, so nearly resembling this picture in the composition and style of execution, that it adds strength to this persuasion;—but I am far from presuming to decide where abler judges cannot agree.

* See Burnet, History of his Own Times, vol. i., p. 393.

Painted by Sir Peter Lely. Engraved by W. Wright.

Anne
Countess of Sunderland

THE COUNTESS OF SUNDERLAND.

"Gracious to all, but where her love was due
So fast, so faithful, loyal, just, and true;
That a bold hand as soon might hope to force
The rolling lights of heaven, as change her course."

WALLER.

ANNE DIGBY, Countess of Sunderland, succeeded to a title which had already been distinguished in the person of her mother-in-law, Dorothy Sidney, the first Countess of Sunderland, Waller's celebrated *Sacharissa*. The second Countess of Sunderland wore her honours with equal grace; she was equally beautiful and blameless, and she played a much more interesting and important part in the real game of life; but she had no poet to hymn her into fame, to immortalize her girdle, and even her waiting-maid,*—to render her name, like that of Sacharissa, a sweet and familiar sound to the fancy and the ear. The celebrity of the second Lady Sunderland is of a very different kind; it has been dimmed by the breath of malice, and mixed up with the discord of

* Waller's Poems. See his address to Sacharissa's waiting-maid, Mrs. Braughton, beginning, "Fair fellow-servant!" &c.

faction; part of the obloquy which attended the political career of her husband fell on her, and party rancour added other imputations; but all evidence deserving of the slightest credit is in favour of the character and conduct of this accomplished woman,—the friend of the angelic Lady Russell and of the excellent Evelyn.

Lady Anne Digby was the second daughter of George Digby, Earl of Bristol; her mother was Lady Anne Russell, daughter of Francis second Earl of Bedford, a woman of the most amiable character and unblemished life. Lord Bristol, who played a most conspicuous part in the civil wars, after the Restoration was one of the most remarkable characters of that time; a compound of great virtues and great vices, splendid talents and extravagant passions: such was his inconsistency of principle and conduct, that Walpole describes him as "one contradiction." He appears, in fact, to have been deeply tinged with that eccentricity (to give it no stronger name) which characterized so many of his noble family in the seventeenth century. His property having been confiscated in the time of Cromwell, he resided abroad for several years, following the various fortunes of his royal master. Clarendon tells us, that at this time he entered deeply into the libertine excesses of Charles's vagabond court; "that he left no way unattempted to render himself gracious to the King, by saying and doing all that might be acceptable to him, and contriving such meetings and jollities as he was pleased with," although he was at this time married, and the father of two daughters. His poor wife lived as well as she might,

occasionally residing at Paris, but generally at the Hague or at Amsterdam; and while abroad, she married her eldest daughter, Lady Diana Digby, to a Flemish nobleman, the Baron Von Mall, of whom we know nothing farther.

At the Restoration, Digby recovered his estates; he became a favourite at court, where his youngest daughter appeared with all the advantages which her father's rank, her mother's virtues, and her own beauty and vivacity could lend her. Lady Anne was at this time not quite seventeen, exceedingly fair, with a profusion of light brown tresses, tinged with a golden hue; she had a complexion of the most dazzling transparency, small regular features, and a slight delicate figure, yet with a certain dignity of presence which is said to have particularly distinguished the Digbys of that age. About the same time Robert Spencer, the young Earl of Sunderland, returned from his travels and appeared at court. He was the only son of Henry, the first Earl of Sunderland* and Dorothy Sidney, and was now about one-and-twenty, eminently handsome in person and full of talents and spirit. He fixed his affections on Lady Anne Digby, and to a match so suitable in years, in rank, and in merit, there could be no objection; but even here, when all the preliminaries were settled between the two great families with due pomp and ceremony, the course of true love was not destined to run

* Killed in the battle of Newbury at the age of twenty-three. See a most interesting memoir of this brave and accomplished nobleman in Lodge's "Portraits and Memoirs."

smooth. The deeds were prepared, the wedding-clothes were bought,—even the day was fixed, yet the marriage had nearly been broken off. The Earl of Bristol, in consequence of some extravagance of language, was called up before the House of Commons to justify himself; he made a most eloquent speech, but with so much heat and gesticulation, that he was compared to a stage-player; and what was worse, his rhetoric did not appear to have much effect upon the Commons, while the Lords were incensed at his appearing before the other house without their express permission: in short, his disgrace or ruin was impending, and Lady Anne had nearly been the innocent victim of her father's misconduct or indiscretion.

In this state of things, those who envied her beauty and her good fortune, or hated her family, reported every where that the marriage was broken off,—that Lord Sunderland had gone out of town, after sending her "a release of all claim and title to her, and advice to his own friends not to inquire into the reasons for his conduct, for he had reason enough for it." All this scandalous exaggeration, which Pepys gives us at full length, was merely "a weak invention of the enemy." It is possible that Lord Sunderland's mother and his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, began to look coldly on the connexion; for the former entertained some jealousy of her daughter-in-law, and the latter disliked and opposed Lord Bristol: but Lord Sunderland did not leave London, nor did he remit his attentions to his chosen bride. After a little delay, the preparations and the courtship

went forward as before; and in the month of July, 1663, the marriage was celebrated with more than usual magnificence. The four or five years which immediately followed her marriage, were probably the happiest of Lady Sunderland's life. Her husband was young, of a gay, magnificent spirit, full of talent and sensibility; and though he entered into the dissipation of the time, and unhappily contracted a passion for deep play, still his early love of literature, a natural elegance of mind, and above all, the affection of a beautiful and accomplished wife, whom he esteemed as well as loved, kept him for some time clear from the open profligacy and crooked politics of a court, where he was always well received, and where his countess took the place due to her rank and loveliness without entering into its follies. Most of their time was spent at Althorpe, and there, within the first four years of her marriage, Lady Sunderland became the mother of three children; Robert Lord Spencer, born in 1664, and two daughters.

They lived at this time with considerable magnificence, so regulated by the excellent sense and domestic habits of Lady Sunderland, that they might long have continued to do so without injury to their splendid income, had not the earl's unhappy predilection for gambling diminished his property, preyed on his spirits, and at length led him to play a more deep and ruinous game of political intrigue, in which he made shipwreck, not only of fortune and domestic happiness, but virtue, honour, fame, and all that man ought to cherish beyond life itself.

upon it as a peculiar grace and favour of God to your ladyship, that amidst so many temptations and grandeur of courts, the attendance, visits, diversions, and other circumstances of the palace, and the way you are engaged in, you are resolved that nothing of all this shall interrupt your duty to God and the religion you profess, wherever it comes in competition with the things of this world, how splendid soever they may appear for a little and (God knows!) uncertain time. Madame, it is the best and most grateful return you can make to Heaven for all the blessings you enjoy; amongst which is none you are more happy in than in the virtue, early and solid piety of my Lady Anne, and progress of your little son. Madame, the foundation you have laid in these two blessings will not only build, but establish your illustrious family, beyond all you can make of gallant and great in the estimation of the world," &c.

This letter does more honour to Lady Sunderland than to Evelyn. The sentiments are rather uncouthly expressed, but *such* sentiments never would have been addressed by Evelyn to a woman suspected of levity and hypocrisy. The little son he alludes to was her son Charles, the common ancestor of the Duke of Marlborough and Earl Spencer. Her eldest son, early emancipated from her control and unchecked by his father, plunged into every species of dissipation; she endeavoured to reform him by an early marriage, and proposed to unite him with the daughter of Sir Stephen Fox. She used Evelyn's intervention in this affair; but Sir Stephen was not well inclined to the match: he evi-

dently disliked the character of the young lord, but excused himself by pleading the extreme youth of his daughter. The countess was deeply mortified and disappointed, but soon afterwards received a severer blow in the death of her son, who died at Paris in his twenty-fourth year. In her second son Charles, afterwards Lord Spencer, Lady Sunderland sought and found consolation; he was in every respect a contrast to his brother, and, at the early age of fifteen, Evelyn alludes to him as a youth of extraordinary hopes, and of singular maturity of intellect. But it was Lady Sunderland's fate to suffer through the virtues as well as the vices of her nearest and dearest connexions; the trial and execution of her cousin, the excellent Lord Russell, and her husband's cousin, Algernon Sydney, in 1683, overwhelmed her with affliction. In one of her letters to Evelyn, she describes her own and her mother's grief in strong and affecting terms. Her tenderness for her mother, Lady Bristol, was at all times truly filial: she now devoted herself to her comfort, and from this period the old lady spent most of her time in the society of her daughter, either at Althorpe or in London.

Evelyn, in his Diary, gives an account of a visit which he paid to Lady Sunderland in 1688. Having invited him to Althorpe, she with true aristocratic magnificence provided a carriage and four to convey him from London, and all his expenses going and returning were defrayed by her command, although Evelyn was himself a man of large and independent fortune. He describes Althorpe, its beautiful park, its tasteful gardens, and

noble gallery of pictures, in language which would serve for the present time,—"and all this," he adds, "is governed by a lady who, without any show of solicitude, keeps every thing in such admirable order, both within and without, from the garret to the cellar, that I do not believe there is any in this nation, or in any other, that exceeds her in such exact order, without ostentation, but substantially great and noble. The meanest servant is lodged so neat and cleanly; the service at the several tables; the good order and decency,—in a word, the entire economy is perfectly becoming a wise and noble person. She is one who, for her distinguished esteem of me, from a long and worthy friendship, I must ever honour and celebrate. I wish from my soul the lord her husband, whose parts and abilities are otherwise conspicuous, was as worthy of her, as by a fatal apostacy and court ambition he has made himself unworthy! This is what she deplores, and it renders her as much affliction as a lady of great soul and much prudence is capable of. The Countess of Bristol, her mother, a grave and honourable lady, has the comfort of seeing her daughter and grandchildren under the same economy."*

Lady Sunderland was the mother of seven children; three of them, a son and two daughters, had died in their childhood. The others, except Lord Spencer, appear to have been under the same roof with her at the period of Evelyn's visit. Charles Spencer was pursuing his studies under an excellent and learned tutor. Her two eldest daughters, Lady Anne and Lady Elizabeth,

* Evelyn's Diary, vol. i., p. 613

were lately married, and are described as "admirable for their accomplishments and virtue." Lady Anne, now in her twenty-first year, was the wife of James Lord Arran, son of the Duke of Hamilton; Lady Elizabeth, who was scarcely seventeen, had just married Donogh Macarty, Earl of Clancarty, a handsome, dissipated, wrong-headed Irishman, of whom Evelyn remarks, "that he gave as yet no great presage of worth." He does not tell us what induced Lord and Lady Sunderland to bestow on him their youthful and lovely daughter, unless it was the earl's "great and faire estate in Ireland."

In 1689, Lady Sunderland quitted her family to accompany her husband abroad; at the Revolution, he was excepted from pardon both by William and James, and went to hide his head in Holland; there, after suffering the extremity of misery, he was arrested by order of the States, but soon afterwards liberated by the interposition of King William. On this occasion Lady Sunderland addressed to the King the following letter, partly the expression of gratitude, and partly of supplication.

Lady Sunderland to King William III.

"Amsterdam, March 11th, 1689.

"The relief I had by your majesty's justice and grace from the sharpest apprehensions that ever I lay under, may, I hope, be allowed a sufficient plea for the liberty I now take to present you my most humble acknowledgments for that great charity of yours; I dare not impute

it to any other motive: but, however unfortunate my present circumstances are, I have this to support me, that my thoughts, as well as actions, have been and are, and I dare to say ever will be, what they ought to be to your majesty; and not only upon the account of the duty I now owe you, but long before your glorious undertaking, I can't but hope you remember how devoted I was to your service, which was founded upon so many great and estimable qualities in you, that I can never change my opinion, whatever my fortune may be in this world; and may I but hope for so much of your majesty's favour as to live quietly in a country where you have so much power, till it shall please God to let me end my days at my own home, I shall ever be most truly and humbly thankful."

Whatever may be thought of the humble tone and petitionary vehemence of this letter, the style is dignity itself compared to the utter prostration of mind which is exhibited in those of Lord Sunderland. The above letter I presume to have been enclosed in the following, addressed to Evelyn, and which I am enabled to give at length from the original autograph.* It is not the best specimen which might have been selected of Lady Sunderland's epistolary style, but the circumstance under which it was written, and the sentiments contained in it, render it particularly interesting.

"AMSTERDAM, March 12th, 1689.

"Under all the misfortunes I have gone through of

* In the Collection of Mr. Upcott.

late, I cannot but be sensible of that of not having heard a word from you. Indeed, I have sometimes need of your letters, as well for to help me as pleas me: and indeed, my good frend, they do both; wherefore, pray make amends. I am sure you have heard of the unusual proceeding my lord met with in this country; but, by the King's grace and justice, he is releast. I heer inclosed, send you a paper which was writ by your advice and another very good frend. If it be not what you like, I hope the sinceritye will make amends; for, indeed, it is exactly true, every tittle, I dare say. I thank God, my lord is come to a most comfortable frame of mind, and a serious consideration of his past life, which is so great a comfort to me, that I must call upon you, my good frend, to thanke God for it, and to pray that I too may be truly thankfull. As to what relates to this world, we desire nothing but to live quietly in Holand, till it shall pleas God we may end our days at Althorpe: that were a great blessing to us; but it will not be thought of such an inestimable price by others as we esteem it; and therefore, I hope in God 'twill not be envyed us. I am sure nothing else in our fortune deserves envy; and yet, having reduced my lord to the thoughts he has, it is for ever to be acknowledged by me to Almighty God, as the greatest of mercies. Pray for me, and love me, and let me hear from you. Do inclose your letters to this merchant. God send us a happy meeting! Farewell!

Yours,

A. S."

"Pray remember to urge, that, desiring to live in Holand till wee can be allowed to live at Althorpe, is neither a sign of a Frenchman nor a Papist; and I thanke God my lord is neither. He has no pretensions, and will have none; and therefore interest cannot make him say it; but he never did any thing but suffer it to be said, besides going to chapel, as hundreds did, who now value themselves for good Protestants. God knows that was so much to my soul's grief; but more had been wrong; and I dare say he is most heartyly and most Cristianly sorry for what he has done."

In a postcript to this letter, she tells Evelyn that she has sent him some rare plants. Thus, in the midst of her own distresses, she could bear in mind the peculiar tastes and occupations of her friend: and when we recollect his character, and that he was a friend of thirty years' standing, we cannot suppose this trifling, but delicate present, was intended to quicken Evelyn's zeal in their behalf, or that it could have weighed for a moment with such a man. However this may be, Lord Sunderland's contrition, his wife's supplications, and the intercession of his friends, proved effectual. He was suffered to reside unmolested at Utrecht for some months, and obtained permission to return to England the following year: but they were scarcely settled again at Althorpe, when the death of her favourite daughter, the young Countess of Arran, (in 1690,) overwhelmed Lady Sunderland with affliction. Evelyn wrote her on this occasion a long letter of condolence, which may be found in his works.*

* Vol. ii., p. 290.

Evelyn's simple yet cordial testimony to the exemplary conduct and domestic virtues of Lady Sunderland, may well be placed against the malicious scandal of a party. The letters of the Princess Anne to her sister the Princess of Orange, written at this period, allude to Lady Sunderland and her lord in terms of the most vulgar and virulent abuse;* but we must remember that, besides her hatred and fear of Lord Sunderland, Anne had a private and personal reason for detesting his wife. An intimate friendship existed between Lady Sunderland and Lady Churchill, afterwards the celebrated Duchess of Marlborough; and Anne, whose romantic attachment for Lady Churchill was now at its height, beheld in Lady Sunderland a rival in the affections of her favourite. Her letters have been quoted as authority against Lady Sunderland; but besides that Anne was a weak fool, and a fond jealous friend, her evidence, suspicious under any circumstances, is absolutely contradicted by the testimony of Evelyn, of Lady Russell, and Lady Sunderland's own

* "I cannot end my letter without telling you, that Lady Sunderland plays the hypocrite more than ever; for she goes to St. Martin's morning and afternoon, because there are not people enough to see her at Whitehall chapel, and is half an hour before other people come, and half an hour after every body is gone, at her private devotions. She runs from church to church after the famousest preachers, and keeps such a clatter with her devotions, that it really turns one stomach. Sure there never was a couple so well matched as she and her good husband; for as she is the greatest jade that ever was, so is he the subtillest workingest villain that is on the face of the earth." Lord Sunderland had lately declared himself a Roman Catholic, which probably made Lady Sunderland more frequent and attentive in her public devotions; a little malignity would easily turn this against her, and a little exaggeration render it remarkable or ridiculous.

letters.* In one of these, addressed to Evelyn, she begs his prayers, his sympathy for her lord, who writhing under conscious self-abasement, rejected by all parties, disgraced by the court, despised by the people, was in truth a pitiable object. "Forget not," she says, "forget not my lord in your prayers for his conversion, which if I could see, I could with comfort live in any part of the world on very little." She speaks of his penitence—his humiliation; and expresses a hope that he will be content to live with her in retirement: his latter years were indeed passed in retirement, but not in content. Before he left the court for the last time, he was heard to say, that "there was no rack like what he

* Of these there are about thirty in the collection of Mr. Upcott, through whose kindness I had an opportunity of looking over them. They extend through a period of about twenty years, and convey, on the whole, a most delightful impression of her character, of the strength of her domestic affections, and the sincerity of her attachments.

In the very beautiful Life of Lady Russell, prefixed to the late edition of her letters, there is the following passage, (page 101.) "Lady Sunderland's letters to Lady Russell are not extant; but the following expressions in her answer to one of them, ought to have forcibly struck Lady Sunderland from the pen of Lady Russell;—'So unhappy a solicitor as I was once for my poor self and family, my heart misgives me when I aim at any thing of that kind any more.' The rest of the letter proves, in the least offensive manner, that she was perfectly aware of the flattering and insincere character of her correspondent."

On this passage I must remark, that the opinion against Lady Sunderland's sincerity has no foundation but in the letters of Queen Anne, (quoted in the preceding note,) and, as Lady Sunderland's historian, I must, in justice to her, place one or two passages from Lady Russell's letters in contrast with the one above quoted. In 1689 she thus writes: "I think I understand almost less than any body, yet I knew better things than to be weary of receiving what is so good as my Lady Sunder-

had suffered." This admission, coming from him in an agony, ought to be recorded as a legacy to those who view "the seals of office glitter in their eyes, and pant to grasp them!"

Besides the friendship existing between Lady Sunderland and Lady Marlborough, there had been a constant interchange of kindness and good offices between the Earl of Sunderland and Lord Marlborough; and in the year 1701 the two families were united by the marriage of Lord Spencer with Lady Anne Churchill, the second and favourite daughter of Marlborough. She was particularly endeared to her parents—not by beauty alone, but by the extreme sweetness of her disposition, and a

land's letters; or not to have a due regard of what is so valuable as her esteem and kindness, with her promises to enjoy it my whole life." And again, in a letter written about 1692, she says, "You have taken a resolution to be all goodness and favour to me: and, indeed, what greater mark can you almost give than remembering me so often, and letting me receive the exceeding advantage of your doing so, by reading your letters, which are all so edifying?—when I know you are continually engaged in so great and necessary employments as you are, and have but too imperfect health, which, to any other in the world but Lady Sunderland, would unfit for at least so great dispatches as you are charged with? These are most visible tokens of Providence, that every one that aims to do their duty shall be enabled to do it." (Lady Russell to Lady Sunderland, Letters, pp. 252—302.) If Lady Russell believed her correspondent to be an *insincere* and *flattering* woman, what shall we say of the sentiments here expressed?—that Lady Sunderland could not go beyond them in flattery and insincerity. There is a long letter from Lady Sunderland to the Prince of Orange, a masterpiece of diplomatic obscurity and affectation, inserted in Dalrymple's Memoirs, and there said to have been written under the dictation of her husband; it cannot therefore be brought in evidence against her.

maturity of judgment above her years: and Lady Sunderland, who was her godmother, appears to have regarded her with exceeding tenderness and admiration long before the idea of uniting her to her son could possibly have entered into her imagination. Lord Spencer was at this time in his thirtieth year; he had a fine person and an admirable understanding, improved by early and assiduous study. "He was remarkable," says the historian of Marlborough, "for a sedateness above his years; but in him a bold and impetuous spirit was concealed under a cold and reserved exterior." Fresh from the study of Greek and Roman lore, he was almost a republican in politics, and had distinguished himself in the House of Commons as an animated speaker in behalf of liberty in its best and largest sense. His deportment in private life was not winning: his father's errors had thrown him into an opposite extreme, in manners as in principles; instead of the bland elegance of address which distinguished the earl, Lord Spencer, wishing to avoid even the shadow of adulation, was either haughty and unbending, or blunt and frank to a degree almost offensive. He had been married young to Lady Arabella Cavendish, daughter of the Duke of Newcastle, and had lost her in childbirth after a short but happy union; her death had thrown a gloom over his mind, adding to the habitual coldness and harshness of his manners. In spite of all these drawbacks, he interested Lady Anne Churchill; but his violent politics displeased her father, and Lady Marlborough, who, termagant as she was, doated on her children even while she tormented them, feared lest her daughter's happiness should be sacrificed

to a man of Lord Spencer's cold, unaccommodating temper. All these difficulties, in time, gave way before the zealous, indefatigable exertions of Lady Sunderland, who knew what were the feelings of her son, and sympathized in them with a mother's heart. She first won over Lady Marlborough, who prevailed on her husband to listen to the promise of the Earl of Sunderland, that his son should be guided in his public conduct by Lord Marlborough. The earl overrated his son's docility, as it afterwards appeared; but for the present he prevailed, and the marriage was solemnized in January 1701, when Lady Anne was not quite sixteen.

Thus Lady Sunderland had the satisfaction of ensuring the domestic happiness of her son in his union with a most amiable and lovely woman, whose charms and tenderness soothed down his asperities, and she was spared the pain of witnessing its early termination. This young and adored wife and mother died in 1716, in her twenty-ninth year: a most affecting proof of her angelic disposition and her devotion to her husband is preserved in the letter she wrote to be delivered to him after her death.* As her person was of a small size, as well as very beautiful, she became a favourite and fashionable toast with her husband's party, under the title of THE LITTLE WHIG. Her son Charles became afterwards Duke of Marlborough; and her son John, commonly called Jack Spencer, was the father of the first Earl Spencer.

* Coxe's History of the Duke of Marlborough, vol. iii., p. 616.

The second Earl of Sunderland died a broken-hearted man in 1702; but his widow, the Dowager Lady Sunderland, survived him for several years, living respected and beloved in the bosom of her family. At length she sank under the accumulated infirmities of age, and expired at Althorpe, April 16, 1715. She had lived to see her accomplished son, the third Earl of Sunderland, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Privy Seal, and Secretary of State; and as distinguished by his patriotism and integrity, as by his talents, activity, and ambition.

The picture, from which the portrait is engraved, is by Lely, and one of the "Beauties" in the Windsor Gallery: it is remarkable for the exceeding delicacy and tenderness of the execution, and the lady-like sweetness and elegance of the turn and expression. It has never before been engraved.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM.

Painted by Sir Peter Lely.

Engraved by T. Wo[illegible]

Mrs Middleton

MRS. MIDDLETON.

" Pictures like these, dear Madam, to design,
Asks no firm hand and no unerring line;
Some wandering touches, some reflected light,
Some flying touch, alone can hit them right."

POPE.

IT is evident, from the number of portraits which exist of this "Beauty" *par excellence*, and the frequent allusions to her in contemporary memoirs, that she must have been a very admired and distinguished personage in her day; yet of her family and life but little is ascertained, and that little is not interesting. She is one of the equivocal heroines of De Grammont, and her brief history, as far as it is known, can hardly serve "to point a moral." And yet what is to be done?—to treat it seriously, were indeed to "break a butterfly upon a wheel;" she fluttered through her day "with insect pinions opening to the sun;" and, apparently, whatever was most admirable and interesting about her, has been preserved in the lovely pictures of her at Windsor and Althorpe. It is impossible to look on *them* without wishing to know who and what was the fair original. Yet if there had been no Lely, there would have been no Mrs. Middleton;—

at least, we could have spared all that the pencil has not perpetuated.

She was the daughter of Sir Roger Needham, a relation of the excellent and celebrated Evelyn; and married to Mr. Middleton, a man of good family but small fortune, of whom nothing is known but that he gave his name to a very beautiful coquette, who, under the shelter of that name, is said to have played some fantastic tricks.

Mrs. Middleton was never attached to the court, nor had she rank or fortune to enable her to take any distinguished place there; but her charms, the admiration she inspired, her love of pleasure and her love of splendour, drew her within that brilliant but dangerous vortex. We find her associating habitually with many well known characters of her own sex, those who were distinguished for correctness of conduct, as well as those who were notorious for the reverse; and surrounded by admirers, the gayest and noblest cavaliers of that dissipated court.

Among these was the Chevalier de Grammont: she appears to have been the first who attracted his notice after his arrival in England. "Then," says his gay historiographer, "lettres et présens trottèrent:"—the first were answered, the last not rejected. But the lover *en restait là:* the lady was not quite so facile as the gentleman expected. "Il s'apperçut que la belle prenait volontiers, mais qu'elle ne donnait que peu;" and, in his

usual style, he seems to have taken pains to make himself hated where he failed in making himself loved.

It appears, that in addition to her pretensions as a beauty, Mrs. Middleton affected the airs of a *précieuse*. She talked as if she had just arrived from that fantastic land the *pays du tendre*, so minutely described with all its districts, its river *d'inclination*, and its various villages of *jolis-vers*, and *petits-soins*, &c. in the most famous romance of the time;* but though she sometimes put her lovers to sleep by discoursing in a strain of the most refined sentimentalism, and discussing *mal-à-propos* the most high-flown maxims of Platonic gallantry, "the fair Madam Middleton," as Pepys calls her, is not accused of suffering her adorers to perish through an excess of cruelty. How the lively De Grammont could possibly have been captivated by a woman "qui ennuyait en voulant briller," we are not told: perhaps her indolent, languid beauty charmed him by force of contrast with the beauties he had left behind in France. However this may be, her trifling appears to have at length exasperated him; and finding, after awhile, that he had more than one competitor,—that young Ralph Montagu (afterwards Duke of Montagu) and Dick Jones (the celebrated Lord Ranelagh) were not only rivals, but, as he had reason to suspect, successful rivals, he was preparing for his faithless, or rather his ungrateful mistress, the most signal vengeance which his ingenious, indefatigable, and malicious

* The Clélie of Mademoiselle de Scuderi. "There will be no talking to your sister when she has read Clelia, for the wise folks say it is the most improving book that can be read."—See Lady Russell's Life, p. 94.

nature could devise; when, happily for poor Mrs. Middleton, he encountered a more powerful charmer, and both his love and his despite were driven out of his eddying brain by the all-conquering attractions of La Belle Hamilton.

It is said that the Duke of York also admired Mrs. Middleton, (which may account for her picture being at Windsor;) and William Russell, brother to the Earl of Bedford, was another of her adorers: but he too transferred his allegiance from this indolent, alluring coquette, to the lively, graceful, elegant Miss Hamilton.

De Grammont says of his *ci-devant* flame, that the ambition of appearing a wit, "ne lui a donné que la reputation d'ennuyeuse, qui subsistait longtemps après sa beauté." It must, then, have existed a long while, for nearly twenty years after this period, in 1683, she paid Evelyn a visit, in company with her old admirer Colonel Russell; and Evelyn mentions her as that "famous and indeed incomparable beauty Mrs. Middleton." Neither, as I think, should we entirely trust to the fidelity of De Grammont's portrait of her: he was a malicious disappointed lover, and Hamilton, who records it, a satirist by profession. Pepys says, that Evelyn described Mrs. Middleton to him as fond of painting, and excelling in it; a pursuit which speaks her not quite the indolent, inane creature which others represent her.

In one of the letters of Dorothy Lady Sunderland,*

* Letters from the Countess of Sunderland to the Earl of Halifax, published at the end of Lady Russell's Life and Letters.

(Waller's Sacharissa,) she thus alludes incidentally to Mrs. Middleton, "Mrs. Middleton and I have lost old Waller; he is gone away frightened:" from which it appears that the poet, in his old age, had enlisted himself in the train of her admirers.

With this "famous beauty," as with others of her class, a youth of folly was succeeded by an old age of cards. She became one of the society of the Duchess of Mazarin,* whose house at Chelsea was maintained on the footing of one of the modern gambling-houses, with this exception, that it was the resort of the dissipated and extravagant of *both sexes*. Many of the women who were occasionally seen in this society, were women of amiable character and spotless reputation, led thither by fashion, and the lax opinions and habits of the time; and probably more attracted by the fascinating manners of the

* The too celebrated Hortense Mancini, whose story is well known. She arrived in England in 1676, and lived on a pension of 4000*l.* a-year, granted her by Charles II. This sum was inadequate to supply her capricious extravagance, and her propensity to gambling; and after a life of strange vicissitudes and wanderings over half Europe, she died at Chelsea in 1699, and her body was immediately seized and detained by her creditors. In her youth she had amused herself with throwing handfuls of gold out of her window into the court-yard below, merely for the diversion of seeing the valets and grooms scramble for it; in her old age she was reduced frequently to want the means of subsistence, and to be indebted to her devoted friend St. Evremond for a few hundreds, (which he could ill spare,) to meet the necessities and distresses of the moment. The best account of this extraordinary woman, "this famous beauty and errant lady," as Evelyn styles her, may be found in Miss Berry's delightful book, "The Comparative View of Society in England and France," p. 227.

duchess, and the wit and gaiety of St. Evremond, and by the "petits soupers ou régnait la plus grande liberté du monde et un égale discretion," (if we may trust St. Evremond,) than by the bassette-table. It appears, for instance, that Lady Rochester, Lady Arlington, the Duchess of Grafton, Lady Derby, were visitors, if not *habituées;* but Mrs. Middleton was one of the latter. Among the occasional poems of St. Evremond there is a little piece which he entitles, "Une Scéne de Bassette," in which the interlocutors are Mrs. Middleton, Madame Mazarin, and Mr. Villiers. La Middleton is discussing with Villiers the charms of some rival beauties;—

MRS. MIDDLETON.
"Dites nous qui des deux vous semble la plus belle
De Mesdames Grafton et Litchfield?*—laquelle?

MR. VILLIERS.
Commencez: dites nous, Madame Middleton,
Votre vrai sentiment sur Madame Grafton.

MRS. MIDDLETON.
De deux doigts seulement faites-la moi plus grande,
Il faut qu'à sa beauté toute beauté se rende.

MR. VILLIERS.
L'autre n'a pas besoin de cette faveur-là.

MRS. MIDDLETON.
Elle est grande, elle est droite—

MR. VILLIERS.
Après cela?

MRS. MIDDLETON.
Madame Litchfield un peu plus animée
De tout ceux qu'elle voit se verrait fort aimée," &c.

After some farther discourse, equally pointless, Madame

* Lady Isabella Bennet, Duchess of Grafton; and Charlotte Fitzroy, Countess of Litchfield, natural daughter of Charles II. by the Duchess of Cleveland.—See vol. i. p. 85, of this work.

Mazarin, enraged at her ill luck at the bassette-table, and the interruption which this silly conversation causes to the more serious business of the evening, angrily attacks Mrs. Middleton:

"Vos beaux discours d'appas, de grace, de beauté,
Nous coutent notre argent—il ne m'est rien resté," &c.

And Mrs. Middleton replies in a pique;

"Nous n'avons pas appris à garder le silence
Comme vous avez fait dans vos couvens de France,
Monsieur, Monsieur Villiers, allons nous consoler;
Il est d'autres maisons, où l'on pourra parler."

The exact date of Mrs. Middleton's death is unknown, but it probably took place between 1685 and 1690; and while she could still eclipse younger beauties by her mature but unrivalled attractions. St. Evremond lamented her in a monody,* not worth transcribing;—but his epitaph on her is rather graceful: it is as follows:

"Ici gît Middleton, illustre entre les belles,
Qui de notre commerce a fait les agrémens.
Elle avait des vertus pour les amis fidèles,
Et des charmes pour les amants.
Malade sans inquiétude,
Resolue à mourir sans peine, sans effort,
Elle aurait pû faire l'étude
D'un philosophe sur la mort.
Le plus indifferent, le plus dur, le plus sage
Prennent part au malheur qui nous afflige tous
Passant, interromps ton voyage,
Et te fais un mérite à pleurer avec nous."

There are many pictures of Mrs. Middleton, but the two most beautiful are those at Windsor and at Althorpe,

* "Stances irréguliers sur la mort de Madame Middleton."—*Œuvres de St. Evremond*, tom. i., p. 92.

both by Sir Peter Lely; the first represents her with the insignia of bounty or abundance, and the latter as Pandora opening her casket of evils. Whether the artist intended in either case to be significant or satirical, is uncertain. At Elvastone, in Derbyshire, the seat of the Earl of Harrington, there is another exquisite picture of Mrs. Middleton. The portrait which has been engraved for this collection, is in the Windsor Gallery. It is distinguished by exceeding brilliance and harmony of colour; the face is beautiful, but not of a high order of beauty; it has that fulness of form and very sweet but somewhat heavy expression, which belonged to the character of the woman; the complexion is fair but richly blooming, and painted with transparent delicacy of touch. The drapery is of a pale amber-colour relieved with white.

This picture has been engraved in mezzotinto, with the erroneous title of Lady Middleton. There is also a fine print of her, a full-length, after Lely, properly designated as Madam Jane Middleton: and the beautiful picture at Althorpe has been engraved for Dr. Dibdin's *Ædes Althorpianæ*.

ATHEN

Painted by Sir Peter Lely

Engraved by T.A. Dean

Elizabeth

Countess of Northumberland

Engraved by T.A. Dean

Elizabeth
Countess of Northumberland

THE COUNTESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

"Court virtues bear, like gems, the highest rate,
Born where Heaven's influence scarce can penetrate.
In life's low vale (the soil the virtues like)
They please as beauties,—here, as wonders strike;
Though the same sun, with all-diffusive rays,
Blush in the rose and in the diamond blaze,
We prize the stronger effort of his power,
And justly set the gem above the flower."

POPE.

THIS Countess of Northumberland, the wife of the last male heir of the PERCIES, and afterwards of an ambassador and minister of state, did not, from accidental circumstances, mingle much in the court of Charles II.; nor, from her mild unpresuming nature, was she personally influential in any of the private state intrigues of that time: but she was distinguished for her uncommon grace and beauty and her blameless life, no less than by her high rank and her descent from one of the most illustrious characters in our history; above all, she was the sister of LADY RUSSELL. The frequent allusions to her in the memoirs and letters of that admirable woman, are sufficient to throw a peculiar interest round Lady

Northumberland, and give her an importance in our eyes beyond what her own rank and beauty could have lent her.

Elizabeth Wriothesley was the youngest daughter of the Lord Treasurer Southampton,* by his second wife Lady Elizabeth Leigh,† daughter and sole heiress of the Earl of Chichester. She was born about the year 1647. The eldest sister, Lady Audrey, was betrothed to Josceline Lord Percy, son of Algernon tenth Earl of Northumberland; but before the arrangements were completed, the bride elect died in her fourteenth year.‡ Lady Elizabeth thus remained sole heiress to the estates of her maternal grandfather Lord Chichester, and her name was substituted for that of Lady Audrey in the marriage contract with Lord Percy, apparently without any reference to the wishes or feelings of either party. In the year 1662, when she was about fifteen, and Lord Percy not quite eighteen, the marriage was duly solemnized: such early marriages were usual in those times,

* Thomas fourth Earl of Southampton, so celebrated for his talents, his loyalty, and his unimpeachable integrity. He was the grandson of that Earl of Southampton who was the friend of Essex, and, what is more, the friend and patron of Shakspeare.

† Lord Southampton's eldest daughter by his first wife, (Rachel de Rouvigny,) had also been christened Elizabeth. She married Edward Noel, eldest son of Baptist Lord Campden, and afterwards the first Earl of Gainsborough.

‡ The Earl of Northumberland, in a letter to Lord Leicester, dated Nov. 2, 1660, expresses his deep regret for the death of Lady Audrey, "because she was of a nature, temper, and humour likely to make an excellent wife."

but, as Lady Russell observes, it was acceptance rather than choice, on either side. Yet being generally arranged by the parents, with a reference to fitness of rank, age, temper, education, and a regard for the future happiness of their children, many of these conventional unions might be mentioned as examples of conjugal felicity: that of Lady Elizabeth appears to have been almost without alloy during its short duration.

For about two years after their marriage, the young bride and bridegroom did not live much together. Lord Percy pursued his studies and exercises under the care of a tutor, and Lady Percy resided with her own family at Titchfield, in Hampshire; but in 1664 and 1665, we find her residing at Petworth with her husband, and hence her affectionate letters to her sister Lady Rachel are dated.* Her eldest daughter, Lady Elizabeth, was born in 1666; in 1668 she gave birth to a son and heir, Henry Lord Percy, and in the year following she had another daughter, Lady Henrietta, who died an infant.

Her husband succeeded to his father's titles and possessions in 1668, and became the eleventh Earl of Northumberland, but he did not long enjoy these honours. In the following year he lost his infant son, and the death of this boy, which occurred soon after her confinement, made so deep and painful an impression on the mind of his mother, that the earl determined on making a tour to the Continent as the best means of diverting her grief; and accordingly they set off for Paris, attended

* See the Life of Lady Russell, p. 18.

by the philosopher Locke as their physician. For reasons which do not appear, but probably from the delicate state of the countess, her husband left her at Paris under the care of Locke, and proceeded alone to Italy: having reached Turin, he was seized with a fever which terminated fatally. He died May 21, 1670, in his twenty-seventh year,—"in the midst of the brightest hopes which this promising young nobleman had excited in the breasts of all good men, that he would prove a shining ornament of his noble house, and an honour to his country," &c.

So far the peerage; we are not told of the grief of his widow, but we may believe it to have been poignant and sincere, since it for some time totally changed her appearance, and so dimmed the native beauty of her cheek, as to give her, at the age of four-and-twenty, a look of faded and premature age.

Not that she was absolutely inconsolable; grief in the young heart either kills at once or is quickly cured, and eternal sorrow is at least as rare as everlasting love. She continued to reside at Paris, where Ralph Montagu, the English ambassador, paid her every attention that could be offered in her afflicted state: these attentions, after a while, awakened a corresponding gratitude in the bosom of the lady, and Montagu began to cherish hopes that attentions of different kinds, and with different views, might some time or other prove acceptable.*

* In the Life of James II. occurs the following entry, which I am unable farther to elucidate. "July 13, 1672. Buckingham proposed to

Ralph Lord Montagu, afterwards Earl and Duke of Montagu, had been appointed ambassador to the French court in 1669. He was a man of splendid habits, eager and insatiable in acquiring wealth, and not very scrupulous, it is said, with regard to the means; but liberal to others, magnificent and even lavish in his expenditure.* He had transcendent abilities as a statesman, and possessed a cultivated and refined taste in the arts, particularly painting and architecture. De Grammont describes him as "peu dangereux pour sa figure," but almost irresistible from his fascinating manners, his assiduity, and his vivacity. About two years after her first lord's death, Montagu began to pay Lady Northumberland marked devotion. He followed her to Aix in the winter of the year 1672. Madame de Sévigné was then in Provence on a visit to her daughter, and Madame de la Fayette thus writes to her from Paris: "Voilà un paquet que je vous envoie pour Madame de Northumberland. On dit ici que si M. de Montagu n'a pas un heureux succès de son voyage, il passera en Italie, pour faire voir que ce n'est pas pour les beaux yeux de Madame de Northumberland qu'il court le pays: mandez nous un peu ce que vous verrez de cette affaire, et comme il sera traité."

the King to get Lady Percy (the infant heiress of Earl Josceline) for Lord Harry, (the King's natural son, afterwards Duke of Grafton). Buckingham at the same time offered to the Countess of Northumberland, to get the King to consent that he should command the Duke of York to marry her."

* His want of principle in money matters, (and also in other matters,) was contrasted with exceeding generosity and high feeling in particular cases: for instance, when he regained by a law process an estate which had been illegally wrested from his family, he remitted to the defendant, Lord Preston, the arrears and costs of suit, thinking the loss of the estate sufficient.—See Granger.

This is an amusing instance of that excessive vanity which characterized Montagu. It would have been interesting to learn what Madame de Sévigné thought of the fair lady, and of the treatment the lover met with, but unhappily her reply is not extant. We may presume that he was not driven to despair; as we find that he followed the countess back to Paris, and was there with her in April 1673. She is again mentioned in a letter from Madame de la Fayette to Madame de Sévigné, from which it appears that her beauty, withered by recent sorrow and self-neglect, did not dazzle the lively Frenchwoman, and that her quiet but amiable disposition, joined to a want of command of the French language, prevented her from producing much effect in society.

"Madame de Northumberland me vint voir hier; j'avais été la chercher avec Madame de Coulanges: elle me parut une femme qui a été fort belle, mais qui n'a plus un seul trait de visage qui se soutienne, ni où il soit resté le moindre air de jeunesse: j'en fus surprise; elle est avec cela mal habillée, point de grâce, enfin je n'en fus point du tout éblouie. Elle me parut entendre fort bien tout ce qu'on dit, ou pour mieux dire tout ce que je dis, car j'étais seule. M. de la Rochefoucauld et M. de Thianges, qui avaient envie de la voir, ne vinrent que comme elle sortait. Montagu m'avait mandé qu'elle viendrait me voir, je lui ai fort parlé d'elle; il ne fait aucune façon d'être embarqué à son service, et parait très rempli d'esperance."

This letter is dated from Paris, April 15, 1673. It is

a pity we have not on record the whole course of a wooing which, notwithstanding the gentle temper of the lady, and the tact and assiduity of the lover, seems to have been diversified in the usual style. Lady Northumberland was jealous of the Duchesse de Brissac, to whom Montagu was formerly attached; and Madame de la Fayette thus writes to her friend about a month after the date of her last letter. "Montagu s'en va; on dit que ses espérances seront renversées: je crois qu'il y a quelque chose de travers dans l'esprit de la nymphe."

It happened, however, that just at this time Montagu was so far from being a dismissed or despairing lover, that he was on the eve of success; he won the heart of the young countess, and, in the same year, (1673,) they came to England privately, and were married at Titchfield in Hampshire, the family seat of the Wriothesleys. It appears that she afterwards recovered those attractions for which she had been distinguished in early youth; for Evelyn alludes to her, eight or ten years afterwards, as "the most beautiful Countess of Northumberland."

In 1675 she was in England, and for some years afterwards she was involved in troubles relative to the disposal of her only daughter by the Earl of Northumberland.* The dowager-countess, who appears to have been a meddling, jealous old woman, demanded to have the entire charge and disposal of the young heiress on her

* See the preceding memoir of this celebrated heiress, afterwards Duchess of Somerset, vol. ii, p. 2.

mother's second marriage. Lady Russell, ever right in judgment as kind in heart, alludes to this affair in one of her letters to her husband. "The two Lady Northumberlands have met at Northumberland-House, after some propositions offered by my sister to the other, which were discoursed first yesterday before my Lord Chancellor, between the elder lady and Mr. Montagu: Lord Suffolk, by my sister, offers to deliver up the child, upon condition he will promise she shall have her on a visit for ten days or a month sometimes, and that she will enter bonds not to marry the child without her mother's consent, nor till she is of years to consent; and on her part, Mr. Montagu and she will enter into the same bonds, that when she is with them, at no time they will marry or contract any marriage for her without the grandmother's consent: but she was stout yesterday and would not hear patiently, yet went to Northumberland-House and gave my sister a visit: I hope for an accommodation. My sister urges, it is hard that her child (that if she has no other children must be her heir) should be disposed of without her consent, and in my judgment it is hard; yet I fancy I am not very apt to be partial."

It was in truth a hardship, and Lady Northumberland felt it and resisted it as such; but the old dowager contrived at length to get Lady Elizabeth completely into her hands, and made her the subject of constant intrigues with men of power who wished for wealth, and rich men who wished for rank and power. The premature marriage of Lady Elizabeth with the famous Tom Thynne,

of Longleat, is known to have taken place through the manœuvres of her grandmother, and against the consent of her mother.

Between 1675 and 1678, Lady Northumberland and Lord Montagu were in England, and Montagu commenced the building of Montagu-House,* on the decoration of which he lavished immense sums. Their married life was not all sunshine; for Montagu, besides being deeply and disgracefully involved in the state intrigues of that period, was a dissipated man of pleasure. Lady Northumberland, who had endowed him with her wealth, appears to have derived no pride nor pleasure from his political exaltation; and, left to herself in his frequent absences, she pined in the midst of her splendour for calmer and more domestic happiness. In the year 1678, Charles (the habitual scoffer at all religion) ordered Montagu to find out and consult, in his name, a certain astrologer at Paris, in whom he put great faith. Montagu found the man, and saw that he was capable of being corrupted by money. He therefore prompted him to give such hints to the King as should serve his own ends. At the same time he was carrying on an intrigue with that mischievous and abandoned woman the Duchess of Cleveland, and had the folly and weakness to trust her with this affair of the astrologer. She afterwards, in a fit of ill humour or jealousy, vowed his ruin; and although she had long been dismissed from

* It was burnt down in 1685, and Montagu immediately began to rebuild it with more cost and splendour than before. It is now the British Museum.

the court and from the King's affections, she had still sufficient art and power to accomplish this object. She sent over to Charles a detailed and exaggerated account of Montagu's transaction with the astrologer; in consequence of which he was disgraced, and Lord Sunderland succeeded him in his embassy. Montagu then revenged himself, by entering into a secret intrigue with Louis XIV. for the removal of the Lord Treasurer Danby, who was exceedingly obnoxious to the French government, and opposed the Roman Catholic interest. For the ruin of Lord Danby, (to be accomplished within a given time,) Montagu asked the sum of one hundred thousand crowns, or an annuity of forty thousand livres for life. This infamous bargain was duly fulfilled, on one side at least; Danby was disgraced, and sent to the Tower, but Montagu only received half the stipulated sum from the French government.* He was afterwards in opposition to the court, and voted for the Exclusion Bill, which gave unpardonable offence; and in 1680 he retired to France, whither Lady Northumberland followed him. She was not of a temper or character to be a participator in these transactions; but she had an ample share in the distress and degradation to which they led, and their effect on the haughty, restless, and excitable temper of

* He was, moreover, reduced to the necessity of making repeated and humiliating applications for the money, at the risk of a discovery, which would have endangered his head. See the letter from the Duchess of Cleveland to Charles II., which ruined Montagu with the King, given at full length in the "Comparative View of Society in England and France;" and the history of Montagu's subsequent intrigues with the French court, in Barillon's despatches to Louis XIV. See also Burnet's History, vol. ii., p. 25.

her husband, necessarily re-acted on her and her happiness. From several slight allusions to her in the letters of Lady Russell and Lady Sunderland, she appears to have suffered much from ill health; to have passively, or at least patiently, endured her husband's infidelities, and never to have interfered with his political intrigues.

They resided unmolested at Paris for several years, and were there during the trial and execution of Lord Russell. So that Lady Northumberland was not near her sister in the hour of affliction; neither had she, though tenderly devoted to her, a mind sufficiently strong to afford support and consolation to one who, in feeling and in intellect, was so much her superior.

In Lady Russell's Letters from 1685 to 1690, the following notices of Lady Northumberland occur. The first alludes to the revocation of the edict of Nantes by Louis XIV.:—

"I read a letter last night from my sister at Paris; she writes, as every body who has humane affections must, and says that, of 1,800,000, there is not more than ten thousand (Protestants) esteemed to be left in France; and they, I guess, will soon be converted by the dragoons, or perish."

11th July, 1686. "I hear by my sister Montagu, she found a sickly family at Paris; her daughter in a languishing condition, worn to nothing with a fever, which has hung about her for the last six weeks. The doctors

apprehend a hectic, but youth, I hope, will overcome it." The allusion is to her only daughter by Montagu, who is afterwards frequently mentioned in Lady Russell's letters, and seems to have been often on a visit with her.

Within a year afterwards, Lady Northumberland lost her eldest son at the age of twelve. "I believe she takes it heavily," writes Lady Russell, "for truly I have not seen her since the child died on Sunday morning."—"Now my own sad trials making me know what a mean comforter I can be, I think the best service is to take some care of her two children, who are both well now; and I hope God will be pleased to keep them so, and teach her to be content."*

After this affliction, Lady Northumberland retired to Windsor, and continued to reside there for some time. The delicate health of her children seems to have been a constant source of uneasiness to her. She had now (1687) one "fine *lovely* boy," (for so Lady Russell designates him,) and of her two daughters, the eldest, Lady Percy, was Duchess of Somerset;† the youngest, Anne Montagu, who was about fourteen, was a slight, fair girl, whose health caused her much anxiety; hence the frequent allusions to these children, and prayers for their preservation, which occur in Lady Russell's letters. In 1688, Montagu, who had always been a zealous friend of liberty,‡ was one of the chief promoters of the Revo-

* Letter xlii. † See vol. ii. p. 4, of this work.

‡ So the biographies,—perhaps we should rather say a zealous enemy of the court in which he had been disgraced.

lution; and being created an earl by King William, Lady Northumberland dropped her first husband's title, and is thenceforth styled Countess of Montagu.

In the following year, the attainder of Lord Russell being reversed, his execution was formally denounced as *murder* by the House of Commons, and a committee appointed to discover and examine those who were the advisers and promoters of it. The proceedings on this occasion appear to have deeply agitated his widow, and renewed all the bitterness of those regrets which the lapse of six years had in some respect softened. Having given so many passages of Lady Russell's letters expressive of her affection for her sister, it is pleasing to see how truly that affection was returned: a melancholy letter from Lady Russell to the countess drew from her this tender reply:

Lady Montagu to Lady Russell.

"Boughton, Dec. 23, 1689.

"I am very sorry, my dear sister, to find by yours, which I received by the last post, that your thoughts have been so much disturbed with what I thought ought to have some contrary effect. It is very true, what is once taken from us in that nature can never be returned; all that remains of comfort, (according to my temper,) is the bringing to punishment those who were so wickedly and unjustly the cause of it. I confess it was a great satisfaction to me to hear that was the public care; it

being so much to the honour, as well as what in justice was due to your dead lord, that I do not doubt, when your sad thoughts will give you leave to recollect, you will find comfort. I heartily pray God you may, and that you may never have the addition of any other loss, which is, and ever shall be, the prayers of

Your entirely affectionate,

E. MONTAGU."

Boughton, in Northamptonshire, whence this letter is dated, was the family seat of the Montagus; and Lord Montagu was now engaged in enlarging and embellishing the house, and planting and decorating the grounds with his characteristic taste and enthusiasm, and indifference to expense. After the Revolution, much of their time was spent there.* In the beginning of 1690, the health of the Countess of Montagu visibly declined, and in September following she died at Boughton, in her forty-fourth year.

Lady Russell thus feelingly alludes to her death: "She was my last sister, and I ever loved her tenderly. It pleases me to think that she deserves to be remembered by all those who knew her: but after forty years' acquaintance with so amiable a creature, one must needs in reflecting, bring to remembrance so many engag-

* Boughton is the property of the present Lord Montagu. When the Duke of Marlborough visited Boughton, he expressed great admiration of the water-works. "But they are not comparable to your Grace's *fire-works!*" replied Montagu with a bow and a smile.

ing endearments as are at present embittering and painful."*

To this simple eulogium nothing need be added. Lady Montagu had four children by her second husband; her two eldest sons, Ralph and Winwood, died young, one son and one daughter survived her: her son John Montagu, Lord Monthermer, became second Duke of Montagu after the death of his father in 1709; he married the youngest daughter of the great Duke of Marlborough. Lady Anne Montagu married Alexander Popham, Esq. of Littlecotes, Wiltshire; and secondly, Lieutenant-General Hervey.

After the death of the Countess of Montagu, the earl, whose splendid tastes and extravagant habits had brought him into some difficulties, determined to repair his fortunes by marrying another heiress. Elizabeth Cavendish, daughter of Henry Duke of Newcastle, and widow of the last Duke of Albemarle, possessed immense riches by marriage and inheritance. The pride of wealth, rank, and grandeur, seems to have disordered intellects naturally weak, and she declared she would give her hand only to a sovereign prince. It is a fact, that Montagu wooed her and won her in the character of the Emperor of China. He afterwards kept her in a sort of confinement in Montagu-House, still without undeceiving her; and she was always served on the knee as Empress of China. She died of mere old age in 1738.

* Letter to the Bishop of Salisbury, dated Oct. 16, 1690.

The portrait of the Countess of Northumberland is engraved after the picture at Windsor. I suppose it to have been painted after her second marriage, for it does not represent her in the bloom of youth, and has more of elegance and dignity than of beauty; the complexion is fair, and the expression all sweetness. The position of the right arm is rather stiff; yet Lely appears to have been fond of this attitude, for he has repeated it in other pictures: the drapery is of a rich brown. The back-ground, which is a fine bit of woodland landscape, with a waterfall in the distance, is admirably painted.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Painted by Sir Peter Lely

Engraved by C.E.

Louise de Querouaille

Duchess of Portsmouth

THE DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH.

" Her birth, her beauty, crowds and courts confess,
Chaste matrons praise her, and grave bishops bless;
In golden chains the willing world she draws,
And hers the gospel is—and hers the laws;
Mounts the tribunal, lifts her scarlet head,
And sees pale Virtue carted in her stead!
Lo! at the wheels of her triumphant car
Old England's genius, rough with many a scar,
Dragg'd in the dust!"

POPE.

THIS is a name disgracefully celebrated, but only a small portion of that disgrace can justly rest upon her who bore it. The period of her reign, for so it may be called, is historically infamous, but the least part of that infamy rests upon the woman herself. If we could tear from the chronicles of our country that leaf which bears the name of Louise de Quéroualle, it were well; but since this cannot be, we ought not to close our eyes to its import, for it conveys a deep lesson. It is impossible to study history without admitting, that the political influence of women has been great in all ages; it has been modified by the difference of manner and the degree of intelligence,—it has been more or less ostensible, more

or less mischievous,—but at all times it has been great, and it increases with the progress of civilization and the diffusion of knowledge. It is not in these days that we are to listen to common-places out of the *Spectator* and the *Ecole des Femmes*. Let it be granted, that "women are formed for private life alone;" but in that privacy—in our nurseries and boudoirs, are inculcated and directed the principles and opinions of those men who are to legislate for the happiness and welfare of nations. This species of indirect influence increases with the spread of civilization and intelligence; it cannot be denied—it cannot be suppressed: is not the next alternative to render it beneficial to society? If a woman could once be taught to feel, to appreciate the grand stake she has in the political institutions of her country, and to understand the interests of humanity at large, she would no longer mix up with these considerations the petty passions, errors and prejudices, and personal feelings which have rendered at all times the political interference and influence of the sex a fertile source of evil, and a never-failing topic of reproach and regret; for evil has been almost constantly the result. The gallantry of men and the vanity of women may here suggest instances of the contrary; but for one Volumnia, how many Cleopatras? for one Agnes Sorel, how many Pompadours and Portsmouths? One thing, however, is certain, that, thanks to the progressive diffusion of freedom and knowledge, we are not likely to behold again in civilized Europe the common decencies of life braved by the insolent triumph of a *maîtresse en titre:* nor "sin in state, majestically drunk," trampling over the destinies of great nations

and the interests of millions of men. A Maintenon will never more half depopulate France, nor a Portsmouth bargain with a foreign despot for the sale of English liberty.

Louise Renée de Penencovet de Quéroualle,* of a noble but impoverished family in Brittany, was appointed Maid of Honour to the Duchess of Orleans in the year 1669; she was not more than nineteen, when, by the interest of some relations in power, she was taken from the convent to which the poverty of her house had at first consigned her, apparently for life, and at once introduced to all the pleasures and temptations of a magnificent and dissipated court: her introduction took place at a critical moment, and in deciding her future fate, has made her destiny and character matter of history.

The conquest, or the ruin of Holland, had long been one of the favourite projects of Louis XIV. The Dutch, however, resisted his overgrown power, as their ancestors had formerly defied that of Philip II. of Spain. In order to carry his plans into execution, Louis found it necessary to detach England from the interests of Holland. This was matter of some difficulty, for an alliance with France against Holland was so odious to all parties in England, so contrary to the national prejudices and interests, that though Louis did not despair of cajoling or bribing Charles into such a treaty, the utmost caution and secrecy were necessary in conducting it.

* The name is spelt variously, Keroual, Kerouaille, and Quérouailles. In England she was Anglicised into Madam Carwell.

The only person who was at first trusted with this negotiation, was Henrietta Duchess of Orleans, the sister of Charles, and sister-in-law of Louis, fatally celebrated in French history as MADAME d'Angleterre. She was at this time about five-and-twenty, a singular mixture of discretion, or rather dissimulation, with rashness and petulance; of exceeding haughtiness, with a winning sweetness of manner and disposition, which gained all hearts. She had inherited some of the noble qualities of her grandfather Henri Quatre, and all the graces and intriguing spirit of her mother Henrietta Maria. Early banished from England by the misfortunes of her family, she regarded the country of her birth with indifference, if not abhorrence. A French woman in education, manners, mind, and heart, she was an English woman only in the peculiar style of her beauty, uniting the utmost majesty of form with a profusion of light hair, eyes as blue and bright as those of Pallas, and a complexion "petri de lis et de roses." On her husband, the worthless, stupid, profligate Duke of Orleans, her wit and charms were equally thrown away. Louis was well aware of her unbounded power over the mind of Charles II., whose affection for her was said to exceed that of a brother for a sister; he had never been known to refuse her any thing she had asked for herself or others, and Louis trusted that her fascinations would gain from the King of England, what reason, and principle, and patriotism would have denied.

To cover the interview between the brother and sister with some kind of pretext, which should give it the

appearance of an accidental or friendly meeting, Louis undertook a progress to his new Flemish provinces; and until Catherine of Russia astonished Europe by her pompous triumphal voyage down the Bosphorus, nothing had equalled in lavish and luxurious ostentation this famous journey. An army of thirty thousand men preceded and followed the royal party: in one spacious and superb equipage, all glass and gilding, travelled the King, the Queen, Henrietta, and Madame de Montespan; then followed their respective retinues; then the Princesses; the Dauphin and his court, Mademoiselle de Montpensier (la grande Mademoiselle) and her court. This was just before the fatal affair of her marriage with Lauzun, who on this occasion rode at the head of the royal guards. It was a perpetual series of fêtes, banquets, and triumphs; the apparent honours were principally for Madame de Montespan; the real object of this splendid journey was known only to Henrietta of Orleans, who enjoyed in secret her own importance, which gave a new zest to the pleasures with which she was surrounded. When arrived at Dunkirk, she embarked for England, with a small but chosen retinue, and met her brother at Dover, where this celebrated conference took place. The event showed that Louis had not reckoned too much on her power; she gained from the facile and unprincipled Charles all that she asked, and the shameful treaty which rendered the King of England the pensioned tool of France, was arranged at Dover in the beginning of June 1670.*

* France agreed to give two millions of livres (150,000*l.*) for the King's conversion to Popery; and three millions a-year for the Dutch war.

Henrietta brought in her train Mademoiselle de Quéroualle, and during her short stay, the exceeding beauty and almost childish graces of this young girl captivated Charles, who was observed to pay her much attention; she, however, returned to Versailles with her royal mistress, and there, within a few days afterwards, witnessed her dreadful death. Voltaire doubts, or affects to doubt, that Henrietta was poisoned, because of the odium which such a suspicion must have thrown on the father of his patron, the Regent-duke of Orleans; but the recent publication of some private memoirs of that time has cleared up the shocking mystery. The intrigues which led to the murder of this unhappy woman, present such a scene of accumulated horrors and iniquity, that, for the honour of human nature, one could wish that the curtain had never been raised which hid them from our knowledge.

On the occasion of her death, the Duke of Buckingham was sent over to France as Envoy Extraordinary; he had been the first to observe the impression which Mademoiselle de Quéroualle had made on the King's excitable fancy, and he resolved to turn it to his own advantage. He had quarrelled with the Duchess of Cleveland — had sworn hatred and vengeance against her; and now to raise her up a rival, who should be wholly governed by himself, seemed to this Proteus of gallantry and harlequin of politics, a very master-stroke of art,—worthy of Machiavel himself. He persuaded

Large sums of money were distributed to Buckingham, Arlington, Clifford.—See the documents in Dalrymple, vol. i., Appendix.

Louis seriously, that the only way to bind Charles to the French interest, was to give him a French mistress: and he told Charles, jestingly, that he ought to take charge of his sister's favourite attendant, if only out of "decent tenderness" for her memory. As to Mademoiselle de Quéroualle, a convent was all she could look to in France, and she was not found impracticable. Matters, in short, were soon arranged; an invitation, so decorously worded as to spare the lady's blushes, was sent from the English court, and she was immediately despatched to Dieppe with part of the Duke of Buckingham's suite, and his Grace's promise to join her with all convenient speed. But what did that most careless and inconsistent of human beings? His admirable scheme of policy, by which he was to build up his own fortunes and power, and ruin all his enemies, was but "one of the thousand freaks that died in thinking;" he totally forgot both the lady and his promise, and leaving the disconsolate nymph at Dieppe to manage as she could, passed over to England by way of Calais. Montagu, then our ambassador at Paris, hearing of the duke's egregious blunder, immediately sent over for a yacht, and ordered some of his own people to convey her with all honour to Whitehall, where she was received by Lord Arlington with the utmost respect, and immediately appointed Maid of Honour to the Queen. "Thus," says Burnet, "the Duke of Buckingham lost all the merit he might have pretended to, and brought over a mistress, whom his own strange conduct threw into the hands of his enemies."

Though the lady carried it at first very demurely, the

purpose of her visit was pretty well understood.* Dryden, the court poet of the time, hailed her arrival in some complimentary stanzas, entitled the "Fair Stranger," not worth quoting here;† and St. Evremond addressed to her an epistle, which, for different reasons, I shall refrain from quoting; it is sufficient, that the elegance of the diction was worthy of his pen; the sentiments worthy of his epicurean philosophy; and the morality—worthy of the occasion.‡

The next we hear of Mademoiselle de Quéroualle is from Evelyn, who notes in his Diary that he had seen "that famous beauty, the new French Maid of Honour;" but adds, "in my opinion, she is of a childish, simple, and baby face." We may judge, from all the pictures of La Quéroualle, that when young, her beauty, though exquisite, must have had the character, or rather the want of character, thus described by Evelyn.§ Within a year afterwards he met her on a visit at Euston, the seat of Lord Arlington, where she was obviously invited for the gratification of Charles. The French ambassador, Colbert,‖ and a number of ladies of high rank, nobles, and

* It had been foretold, apparently; for Madame de Sévigné thus writes to her daughter: "Ne trouverez-vous pas bon de savoir que Kéroual dont l'étoile avait été devinée avant qu'elle partit, l'a suivie très-fidèlement? Le Roi d'Angleterre l'a aimée, elle s'est trouvé avec une légère disposition à ne le pas haïr; enfin," &c.—Lettre 190.

† See Dryden's Works. Scott's edit. vol. xi., p. 163.

‡ Œuvres de St. Evremond, vol. iii., p. 280.

§ Evelyn's Diary. This note is dated November 1670, about a month after her arrival in England.

‖ Brother to the great minister Colbert: he had signed the treaty at Dover.

courtiers, were there at the time. Charles came over every other day from Newmarket, and made no secret of his attentions to the young beauty.*

In the year 1672 she bore the King a son, (who was created, in 1675, Duke of Richmond and Earl of March in England, and Duke of Lennox and Earl of Darnley in Scotland.)† In the following year Mademoiselle de Quéroualle was created by letters patent, (August 19, 1673,) Baroness Petersfield, Countess of Farneham, and Duchess of Portsmouth. Yet further to exalt and blazon a shame which sought neither disguise nor concealment, Louis XIV. conferred on her the duchy of Aubigny, in the province of Berri, in France,‡ as a mark of his friendship for his good brother the King of England, and of his respect for the lady, whose progenitors, as the preamble sets forth, "had always held a considerable rank in Brittany, and had done good service to the throne," &c. Finding that she was likely to prove a staunch supporter of his interests in England, Louis added to the title and dignity of duchess and peeress of France the revenues of the territory of Aubigny, and a considerable pension.

The unbounded power which this woman acquired over the easy disposition of her royal lover, was not

* See Evelyn, vol. i., p. 419.

† These titles had lately reverted to the Crown by the death of the last Duke of Richmond of the Stuart family, the husband of La Belle Stuart.—See vol. ii., p. 17.

‡ By virtue of this grant, the present Duke of Richmond is Duc d'Aubigny, and a peer of France.

owing to any superiority of wit or intellect, nor did she attempt to govern him, like the Duchess of Cleveland, by violence and caprices; though imperious and wilful, she was more artful and flexible; she studied to please and observe the King until she had fixed him, then, if he refused or delayed her wishes, she had tears, and sullens, and fits of sickness at command. Her rapacity and prodigality were quite equal to those of her predecessor. "This day," says Evelyn, "I was casually shown the Duchess of Portsmouth's splendid apartment at Whitehall, luxuriously furnished, and with ten times the richness and glory of the Queen's; such massy pieces of plate, whole tables, stands, &c. of incredible value!" And yet at this time Charles was reduced to the basest expedients for money: shuffling with his ministers, duping his friends, exasperating his people, and absolutely begging like a mendicant of Louis XIV., and using the intercession of the duchess to obtain from him occasional supplies.*

The following note in Evelyn, also relating to the extravagance of the Duchess of Portsmouth, is very characteristic. "Following his majesty this morning through the gallery, I went with the few who attended him into the Duchess of Portsmouth's dressing-room, within her bed-chamber, where she was in her morning

* The Whig party, at one of their meetings, proposed to impeach some of his mistresses, upon account of the poverty in which their extravagance had involved him. On which old Lord Mordaunt said, "that they ought rather to erect statues to the ladies who made their lover dependent on Parliament for his subsistence."—*Vide* King James's Memoirs, and Dalrymple.

loose garment, her maids combing her, newly out of her bed, his majesty and the gallants standing about her; but that which engaged my curiosity was, the rich and splendid furniture of this woman's apartment, now twice or thrice pulled down and rebuilt to satisfy her prodigality and expensive pleasures, while her majesty's does not exceed some gentlemen's wives in furniture and accommodation. Here I saw the new fabric of French tapestry, for design, tenderness of work, and incomparable imitation of the best paintings, beyond any thing I had ever beheld. Some pieces had Versailles, St. Germains, and other palaces of the French king, with huntings, figures, and landscapes, exotic fowls, and all to the life, rarely done. Then for Japan cabinets, screens, pendule clocks, great vases of wrought plate, tables, stands, chimney furniture, sconces, branches, braseras, &c. all of massive silver, and out of number; besides some of his majesty's best paintings. Surfeiting of this, I dined at Sir Stephen Fox's, and went contented home to my poor, but quiet villa. What contentment can there be in the riches and splendour of this world, purchased with vice and dishonour!"

There was, in truth, but little of contentment within those splendid walls. It may be, that there was not much repentance for the sin—nor much sense of dishonour; but fears, and jealousies, and perplexities, and heart-aches, disgraceful and malicious intrigues, public and private conspiracies, and all the demons that wait on pride, avarice, perfidy, ambition, haunted the precincts of this temple of luxury; the new peeress, in her gems

and ermine, was laughed at by Nell Gwynn,* hated by the Queen, despised in private, and lampooned in public.

In 1675, the arrival of the Duchess of Mazarin in England had nearly overturned the empire of the Duchess of Portsmouth. That "Ladye errant," after many and notable adventures, came over with the professed intention of captivating the King; that very King, to whom the short-sighted policy of her uncle had once refused her as a bride!† Hortense concealed, under a languid air and a careless manner, as much arrogance and ambition as a Cleveland or a Portsmouth, with more natural wit than either of them. But born to beauty, rank, power, wealth, she was the complete spoiled child of nature and fortune,—a sort of female Buckingham in her uncontroulable passions, her extravagant whims, and instability of purpose. She had scarcely arrived in London, where she was received with distinction, when a sudden passion for the Prince de Monaco put to flight all her ambitious views on the heart of Charles; for with her the last caprice was ever paramount. The court was thus spared the delectable amusement of a combat of daggers or bodkins between the rival duchesses; but St. Evremond was in despair, and Charles in a fury. The vagrant heart of this royal

* See vol. i., p. 169 of this work.

† It is true that Charles in his exile had offered to marry this niece of Cardinal Mazarin, and it is true that the offer was refused; it was then Mazarin's interest to keep well with Cromwell, and the return of Charles to his throne was deemed impossible.

Squire of Dames had been captivated in the first moment by the attractions of Mazarin; she was now dismissed from Whitehall, and he withdrew her pension. After awhile his wrath subsided; he restored her pension at the earnest intercession of some of her friends at court, but returned to La Portsmouth, whose power over him was increased by this short estrangement: she could not, however, by all her arts, detach him from Nell Gwynn, whose genuine wit, unfailing animal spirits, and careless humour, were a relief from the vapours, caprices, and political cabals which often annoyed him in the duchess's boudoir.*

As years passed on, her power grew by habit, and with it her arrogance. The ladies of the court tossed their heads at poor Nell, the untitled mistress; but the most immaculate in character, the most illustrious in rank, thought themselves happy in the notice and intimacy of the ennobled courtesan. Now and then she had to endure mortifications: it is true the Arlingtons, the Sunderlands, the Arundels, the Cliffords, the Lauder-

* One of Andrew Marvel's satires thus alludes to the indolent Charles and his insolent mistresses:

> "In loyal libels we have often told him
> How one has jilted him, the other sold him;
> How that affects to laugh, how this to weep,
> But who can rail so long as he can sleep!
> Was ever Prince by two at once misled,
> False, foolish, old, ill-natured, and ill-bred?"

At all times the licence of personal satire has kept pace with the licence of manners and morals; but the remedy is sometimes as bad as the disease,—or rather is itself a disease.

dales—even the lovely young Duchess of York, combined to surround the favourite with a glory which kept her in countenance, and served to gild over her shame; but the Russells, the Cavendishes, the Butlers, stood aloof. She once sent word to the excellent and venerable Duchess of Ormond, that she would dine with her on such a day. The duchess did not decline the *honour*, but she sent her two grandaughters, Lady Betty Stanhope and Lady Emily Butler, out of the house on this occasion, and received the Duchess of Portsmouth alone. They sat down to dinner, with only her chaplain *en tiers;* and we may easily suppose that the Duchess of Portsmouth did not again invite herself to the table of the Duchess of Ormond.*

Carte, who gives us this characteristic trait, has also related an almost incredible instance of the impertinence, rapacity, and influence of the favourite. When the daughter of the ill-fated Henrietta of Orleans became Queen of Spain,† Charles ordered the famous jeweller Laguse to prepare an ornament of gems of the value of fifteen thousand pounds, as a present to his niece; and Lord Ossory was appointed envoy extraordinary to convey it to her, with the usual compliment of congratulation; but the duchess having in the interim cast her eyes on the jewel, it so pleased her fancy that she insisted on appropriating it. The King had every art but the art of saying *no*, and Ossory's journey was

* Carte's Life of Ormond.

† She was sent into Spain at the age of fourteen, and perished, like her mother, in the bloom of youth, and by a similar death.

stopped on the plea that economy was the order of the day, and that it was too expensive; on the same economical principle the jewel was presented to the Duchess of Portsmouth. What became of it afterwards I do not know.

On another occasion, the Duke of York took it into his head to descant in her presence on the virtue and piety of Louis XIV., who, at the command of a new confessor, had sent Montespan into a convent during Lent, in order that he might be contrite with a better grace. The duke related all the circumstances, and dwelt upon them with much eloquence and solemnity, to the infinite impatience and embarrassment of the duchess; she was however *quitte pour la frayeur*.

The Queen detested her; but the little spirit which poor Catherine had at first exhibited, as well as her affection for the King, had long subsided,—the first into passive endurance, the latter into absolute indifference. When the Act was passed in 1678, obliging all persons to take a test against Popery, and a proviso was inserted in favour of the Queen and nine ladies about her person, she required all her attendants to cast lots, but named the Duchess of Portsmouth with herself as excepted, and not to be exposed to the uncertainty of a lot. The excuse made for this piece of complacency to her rival was her own perilous situation, which made it necessary to display an extreme alacrity in anticipating the wishes of the King. This conduct, the effect of fear only, excited so little gratitude, that not long afterwards we have an instance of the abject and heartless slavery of

Charles, and of the unfeeling insolence of his sultana, which cannot be recorded without indignation. The duchess was Lady of the Bed-chamber to the Queen, as Lady Castlemaine had been before her,—not so much to preserve appearances, as to give her, by virtue of her office, a right to lodgings in Whitehall. It may easily be imagined that the duties of her place were dispensed with; but on one occasion, contrary to her usual custom and the Queen's wishes, she chose to attend on her majesty at dinner, and behaved with so much effrontery, that the Queen, who had little command of temper, was thrown into extreme disorder, and at last burst into tears.* The duchess laughed behind her fan, and uttered some words of derision almost aloud: this audacity excited so much disgust and indignation, that the King interposed. Catherine's spirit was, however, a mere flash of excited temper; and the next time we hear of her, she is the Duchess of Portsmouth's partner at loo.†

Many intrigues were carried on against the imperious favourite; many attempts were made to remove her, or introduce a rival, or a substitute, in the heart of the indolent, inconstant Charles,—but without effect. She had numerous enemies, and not one friend; but she had so many spies and dependants around her, she was so well served through fear or interest, that she contrived to anticipate or defeat all the plots against her, and keep old Rowley chained to her footstool while he lived.‡

* Sir John Reresby's Memoirs. † Lady Sunderland's Letters.

‡ The interest of the story of "Peveril of the Peak" turns on a plot of this kind,—fictitious of course, but resembling in its outline the story of Miss Lawson, (see p. 27). The King obtained the nick-name of Old

Nor did she reign merely through the influence of her beauty and her feminine arts. If this woman had confined herself to securing her personal influence in the heart of Charles,—if she had been satisfied with amassing wealth and appropriating diamonds, the world had wanted one signal instance of mischievous, misplaced power in our sex. We find the Duchess of Portsmouth, almost from her first arrival in England, engaged in the deepest and most dangerous state intrigues; and so completely did she fulfil the intentions and instructions of Louis in binding her lover to the French interests, that England, to use the strong expression of one historian, "was, in her time, little better than a province of France." As far as the government was concerned, this was true; but, fortunately, the tide of national feeling had set in a contrary direction, and though repressed for awhile, it was afterwards nobly asserted.

In the boudoir of the Duchess of Portsmouth was concerted that treaty, or rather that conspiracy, between Charles II. and Louis XIV., a principal article of which was, that Charles should not call a Parliament for a certain number of years; and that during that time, he should have money from the court of France to enable him to govern independently, and carry his measures

Rowley from that of an ugly old horse in the royal stud, which was celebrated for the number and beauty of its offspring. He was ignorant of this satirical cognomen, till one day happening to visit one of the Maids of Honour, he found her singing a most libellous song on "Old Rowley the King." After listening a few minutes at the door, he tapped gently: "Who's there?" said Miss Howard from within; "Old Rowley himself, madam," replied the King, opening the door.

without the consent of his people. The amount of this pension caused much dispute. The plea used by Charles to persuade Louis to come in to his terms was, "that it would render England for ever dependent on him, and put it out of the power of the English to oppose him." These were the King's own words,—may they stick like plague-spots to his memory! The Duchess of Portsmouth promised for her lover, that if Louis would give four millions of livres, he should enter into all the engagements the King of France could desire. The terms were at last arranged between Bouillon, the French envoy, and Lord Sunderland.

During this secret negotiation, French money was lavished on all sides *à pleines mains:* not only the ministers, courtiers, and their dependants, but some of the women of the highest rank in the court accepted presents and *gratifications* from France, on conditions pretty well understood: and "*not* to be corrupted was the shame."* Many of these transactions were well known to the King, who treated them with profligate indifference, and even raillery. While Charles and his confidants were bribed into compliance with the wishes of

* The French minister thus writes to his master:—"Lady Arlington having offered in her husband's presence to accept of the present intended for her husband, he reproached her, but very obligingly." About a year afterwards, he says:—"My Lord Arlington made me a visit on purpose to let me know how much he is penetrated with the marks of esteem and distinction which your majesty has given by the magnificent present made to Lady Arlington." Again, "Lady Shrewsbury, on receiving her French pension, said, 'She would make Buckingham comply with the King in all things.'" Again, "If your majesty thinks I ought again to

Louis, the French ambassador and the Duchess of Portsmouth were intriguing with the popular, or Whig party, in order to embarrass the government, and prevent the King from becoming too independent; and Charles was duping, or trying to dupe, all parties in turn. In the midst of this scene of perfidy and meanness, and moral and political debasement,—while the traitor nobles, and their more traitorous King, were licking the dust like reptiles round the footstool of a French courtesan, was she, on whom so much of the odium has been thrown, the most culpable or the most contemptible figure in the vile group? Like Circe, who retained her human and feminine attributes in the midst of the herd of wretches around her, transformed and degraded by the taste of her enchanted cup, *she* had still some womanly feelings left,—and for *her*, Justice might find some excuse; for the others none. She was introduced to the French court just in time to witness the *elevation* and triumph of Madame de Montespan; to see her the object of envy to the women, and of obsequious homage to the men; to see her carriage surrounded by a troop of horse, and her levee crowded by obsequious nobles:—was it to be expected that she alone was to look beyond

press Lord Hollis to accept the box of diamonds, I may, by means of Lady Hollis, make him accept of it. I don't presume she will be so difficult as he has been." (Lord Hollis died before the box could be again offered to him, and it was given to Lord St. Albans.) Montagu was promised 100,000 livres for contriving the disgrace and fall of Lord Danby, (but received only half the sum;) "Lord Sunderland and the Duchess of Portsmouth hinted that they expected *gratifications* from France." (They received 10,000 and 5000 pistoles with a very good grace.) See the original despatches quoted in Dalrymple's Appendix.

this illusion, and turn from a temptation which she had learned to regard as an object of ambition? She was a foreigner: treachery to England was truth and good service to her own country; perfidy on one side was patriotism on the other,—at least it has been accounted so in other heroines; only this French Judith was satisfied with turning the head of her lover, and had no wish to cut it off. Farther—she was a woman, with the feelings and affections of a woman. She was attached to Charles, was true to him—to him who believed her the only friend he had in the world, yet did not hesitate to dupe her whenever he wished,—through her, to dupe others. She doated on her son, and by these two feelings, superior even to her fears and her avarice, she was frequently governed by the intriguing ministers around her. For instance, when the Bill to exclude the Duke of York from the throne was agitated with such factious clamour, the nation beheld the strange spectacle of the French mistress leagued with the Whig and Protestant faction, and intriguing with the popular leaders of the House of Commons against the court; because that Machiavel, Shaftesbury, had represented to her, that if the usual law of succession was once set aside, her son the Duke of Richmond would become of more importance, and even have some chance of succeeding to the throne: and such was her ignorance or her imbecility, that she fell at once into the snare. They also worked on her fears, by threatening to vote her a public grievance. It is said, that on this occasion she threw herself at the feet of the King and shed a flood of tears, beseeching him not to sacrifice her and himself to his

affection for his brother: but this time she kneeled and wept in vain.

It is curious, that during that grotesque and sanguinary farce, the Popish plot, which threatened even the person of the Queen, the Duchess of Portsmouth not only escaped its all-devouring snares, but enjoyed a kind of popularity; so that when a member of the House of Commons rose up to move an address, "That she should be sent out of the kingdom," the purport of his speech was no sooner guessed, than it was drowned in a tumult of dissentient voices. One part of this pretended plot being the murder of the King, she had an excuse for being on the opposite side. It is even said, that at the trial of poor old Lord Stafford, she was in the court dealing out smiles and *bon-bons* to the witnesses against him.

It is said, in the Life of Lord Russell, that the old Earl of Bedford offered the Duchess of Portsmouth one hundred thousand pounds to procure the pardon of his son, and that she refused it. As she was never known to resist a bribe, it is more probable that she did make the attempt, and failed. In this instance, as in some others, the Duke of York's influence outweighed hers.

In the year 1681, her son, the Duke of Richmond, then about nine years of age, was installed a knight of the Garter. At this period, and previously, the knights of the Garter wore the blue ribbon round the neck, with the George appendant on the breast; but the duke's

mother having some time after his installation introduced him to the King with his ribbon over his left shoulder, and the George appendant on the right side, his majesty was so much pleased with the alteration, that he commanded it in future to be adopted. Thus the Duchess of Portsmouth has some claim to be considered as joint patroness of the most noble order of the Garter with the Countess of Salisbury, of chivalrous memory, whose face could not have been more fair, and whose fame, by all accounts, was not much fairer.

About the same time, another secret treaty with France was arranged in the boudoir of Madame la Duchesse. The principal article of this treaty was, that Charles should never more call a Parliament, and should receive on that condition two millions of livres for one year, and a million and a half for two years more. Lord Hyde, Lord St. Albans, and the Duchess of Portsmouth, were alone privy to this infamous bargain, which was managed verbally, but the proofs of which remain in Barillon's despatches. It is well known that after this treaty, or rather *treason*, had been consummated, Charles dissolved his Parliament, and never assembled another. It was a little later, about 1682, that Louis, being resolved to seize on Luxembourg, the key to the Netherlands and Germany, prevailed on Charles, through the influence and caresses of the Duchess of Portsmouth, to look on quietly while this piece of arbitrary injustice was perpetrated against the faith of treaties, and against the interest of England. Charles received 300,000*l.* for his passive treachery. The amount of the *gratification*

which rewarded the duchess is not ascertained; but she ever afterwards piqued herself on this affair of Luxembourg, and boasted of it as the last and best piece of service she had rendered the court of France.* In the midst of these vile state intrigues, the interior of Whitehall is described by contemporaries as a scene "of inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness;" but the under current was bitterness, terror, and gloom. Charles, who had been so remarkable for his easy gaiety, had latterly sunk into a kind of melancholy apathy; the duchess became alarmed by his illness and her own unpopularity. She changed her conduct after the dissolution of the last Parliament, turned against the popular party, connected her interests with those of the Duke of York, and brought Lord Sunderland again into the administration: in fact, Sunderland, whose insinuating arts few could withstand, found means to work on her feelings and her fears. He began by proving to her, that her son could never hope to succeed to the crown; but that, through his (Lord Sunderland's) interest and that of the Duke of York, she might gain an immense hereditary settlement for him. The duke was not wanting in promises on his part, so that on one occasion, in 1684, when the duchess was seized with a sudden indisposition, (the consequence of that habitual *gourmandise* in which she indulged,) she called the King to her, and made him swear, in case of her death, to stand by his brother. On her recovery, the Duke of York sent to thank her for a proof of interest, which

* Burnet, vol. ii., p. 181. Dalrymple, vol. i., Appendix to book i. Evelyn, vol. i., p. 537.

appeared at least sincere; yet he contrived to delay, and at length to evade the promised settlement on her son. Meantime the King's spirits declined; nothing, as it was commonly said, went near his heart, for in truth he had no heart; but the inextricable web of difficulties in which his duplicity and extravagance had involved him began to prey on his mind. He had been false to all, he was mistrusted by all; insignificant abroad, contemptible at home: while Louis XIV., sick of his vacillating, and tired of his complaints and his mean importunities, not only withheld his pension and intrigued with his subjects against him, but actually threatened to publish through Europe the articles of their secret treaties, which would not only have rendered him detestable in the eyes of all men, but might have proved fatal to his crown and life;*—his father had lost his head for much less cause. Charles was struck at once with terror and rage to be thus over-reached; his gaiety forsook him, and with it his good-breeding and good-nature, which were mere manner and temperament. To his natural laziness was added extreme depression of spirits, and a sudden and unusual fit of jealousy increased his ill-humour. In 1684, the Grand-Prieur de Vendome,† brother to the Duke of Vendome, came over from France on some secret mission, and had particular orders to ingratiate himself with the Duchess of Portsmouth.

* Barillon, the French envoy, confesses that he had a discretionary power to threaten Charles with this discovery, but was to keep it in reserve *as a stroke of thunder*.

† He was the grandson of Henri Quatre, consequently cousin to the King. He came over first in 1680.

This Grand-Prieur appears to have possessed in himself a rare union of qualifications; he was prelate, statesman, soldier, courtier, and man of gallantry;—very handsome, and very slovenly. He began by losing his money to the duchess; and then, under pretence of state affairs, was so frequently closeted with her, that the King, roused from his usual indolence and indifference, ordered the Grand-Prieur to quit England. Yet his behaviour to the duchess at this very time displayed an increase of fondness and confidence, and whether there were any real grounds for this suspicion remains doubtful.

Such was, at this period, the alteration in Charles's spirits and deportment, that the Duchess of Portsmouth began to tremble for him and for herself. When she was about to make a journey to Bath, whither Sir Charles Scarborough (the court physician) had ordered her, Lord Sunderland stopped her departure, by asking her if she could be such a fool as to let the King feel he could do without her? And taking advantage of her fondness for her lover,* his fertile brain and restless spirit, which seem to have "toiled in frame of villanies," conceived a new plot: he persuaded the duchess that the only means of restoring the King to health and spirits, was to prevail on him to change his measures entirely, reconcile himself to the Parliament and people, banish the Duke of York, and recall Monmouth.† The

* The expressions used by Dalrymple.

† Lord Sunderland's aim was to ingratiate himself with the Prince of Orange, whose party was becoming every day stronger in England.

duchess listened; always impotent in mind, facile as she was headstrong, and without any fixed principle of conduct, except that of securing the King's affections and her own power over him, she readily lent herself to Sunderland's projects; but in the very commencement of this new intrigue, Charles was seized with apoplexy.

It must be allowed that the deportment of the Duchess of Portsmouth, in his last moments, considering her situation and her tenets of belief, did her some honour. She had often been compared to Alice Pierce in the lampoons of the days, but her conduct was very different. It was made a subject of reproach to her, that she was found seated by the King's pillow and supporting his head, where the Queen ought to have been, (but where the Queen *was not*); and it was considered "a piece of indecency" that she had desired Bishop Kenn to take the Duke of Richmond to his father to receive his last blessing;* but her solicitude on these points does not surely deserve so hard a construction. On the second day of the King's seizure, Barillon writes that he found the duchess in her apartment overwhelmed with affliction; but that instead of speaking of her own grief or her own affairs, she appeared extremely anxious for the state of the King's soul. "Nobody," said she, "tells him of his condition, or speaks to him of God. I cannot

* The good bishop was much blamed for his compliance.—*Vide* Burnet. This was the same bishop who, when Charles II. lodged at his house at Winchester, refused to admit Nell Gwynn into it. The King put himself into a passion; but Nell defended the bishop, observed that he only did his duty, and retired voluntarily to another lodging.

with decency enter the room; the Duke of York thinks only of his affairs. Go to him, I conjure you, and warn him to think of what can be done to save the King's soul; lose no time, for if it be deferred ever so little, it will be too late!"

She had all along been in the secret of Charles's real sentiments with regard to religion, and a priest being brought, he died in the profession of the Catholic faith. He frequently recommended the Duchess of Portsmouth and her son to his successor, "in terms," says Burnet, "as melting as he could fetch out;" and after his death, the first visit of condolence which James the Second paid was to the Duchess of Portsmouth; the second to the Queen-dowager, whose grief, in truth, was the more apocryphal of the two.

Soon after the death of Charles the Second, the Duchess of Portsmouth retired to France, carrying with her a large sum in money and jewels;* and from this time, though her life was prolonged beyond the usual term of humanity, very few particulars are known concerning her. She lived at first with considerable splen-

* [She seems at this time to have been involved in debt. The following curious entry occurs in the interesting Memoirs of the Marquis de Sourches, lately discovered and published at Paris by M. Bernier. March, 1685. "On assuroit encore que ce prince (James II.) étoit allé rendre deux visites fort honnêtes à Madame la Duchesse de Portsmouth, l'une des maîtresses du feu roi son frère; mais qu'à la dernière visite, il lui avoit conseillé que, si elle vouloit se retirer d'Angleterre, comme elle sembloit en avoir envie, elle eût le soin de payer toutes ses dettes, ne pouvant pas se faire fort auprès d'elle, si elle en usoit autrement, d'empêcher que les Anglois ne lui firent quelqu' insulte."—Ed.]

dour, but lost immense sums at play; and her pension from England being stopped, it appears that she was reduced to great difficulties. She came over to England in 1699, and found her son the Duke of Richmond married to Lady Anne Brudenell, widow of Lord Bellasys, and the father of three children. She returned to Paris, but came over again in 1715, and was presented to the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline.* Her object, it is said, was to obtain a pension from the English government: if she had the assurance to ask it, apparently the government had not the assurance to grant it. In 1718 she was a poor pensioner on the French court, and was living on an allowance of eight hundred a-year. In the Memoirs of the Duc de Saint Simon she is thus incidentally mentioned:

"Le Régent accorda à la Duchesse de Portsmouthe 8,000 liv. d'augmentation de pension à 12,000 liv. qu'elle en avait déjà: elle était fort vieille, très convertie et pénitente, très mal dans ses affaires, reduite à vivre dans sa campagne. Il était juste et de bon exemple de se souvenir des services importants et continuels qu'elle avait rendus de très bonne grâce à la France, du temps qu'elle était en Angleterre, maîtresse très-puissante de Charles II."

Voltaire, who saw her about this time at the age of seventy, describes her as still surprisingly beautiful,

* At the first drawing-room held by George I., the Duchess of Portsmouth, the Countess of Dorchester, ci-devant mistress of James II., and the Countess of Orkney, mistress of William III., found themselves standing together in the royal presence. "Good Lord!" exclaimed

"avec une figure encore noble et agréable, que les années n'avaient point flétrie."

The last years of her life were spent in retirement, and in a penitence which we may hope to be sincere. She died at Paris in 1734, in her eighty-seventh year.

The Duchess of Portsmouth had a younger sister, Henriette de Quérouaille, whom she invited over to England, and married to Philip seventh Earl of Pembroke. He was a man of violent and eccentric temper; she lived most unhappily with him, and he treated her so ill, that the duchess threatened to make the King interfere. The earl made a brutal reply, which silenced her, and his death soon after, (in 1683), relieved his wife from his tyranny. This Countess of Pembroke had a daughter married to the son of the infamous Judge Jefferies.

It is, perhaps, worth remarking, that the first company of French actors who ever appeared in England, came over for the amusement of the Duchess of Portsmouth; and, through her patronage, were for a time so followed by the court and the public, as to excite the envy and despair of the English players, and call down a bitter satire from Dryden, who wrote one of his Prologues expressly to turn them into ridicule.

The pictures of the Duchess of Portsmouth are very

Lady Dorchester, whose impudence equalled her wit, "who would have thought that we three ——— should have met here!" They had all been raised to the peerage on the same terms.

numerous, and easily recognised; for though her face had not much expression, its extreme loveliness, the peculiar beauty of the full lips, and a childish sweetness and simplicity in the look, give to all her pictures a very distinct character. There is a splendid full-length of her at Dunham Massey, the seat of the Earl of Stamford: another, equally fine, at Blenheim. The picture of her at Hampton Court is by Gascar, a French painter, whom she brought over and patronised; that at Goodwood, in the possession of her descendant the Duke of Richmond, I presume to be by the same artist. At Kensington there is a portrait of her by Verelst, holding a wreath of flowers. There is a picture of her at Holland-House, and two at Strawberry-hill.

Lely painted a picture representing Charles and the Duchess of Portsmouth as Cymon and Iphigenia.

"Along the margin of the fount was laid,
Attended by her nymphs, a sleeping maid.
* * * *
The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes,
And gaping mouth that testified surprise,
Fix'd on her face, nor could remove his sight,
New as he was to love, and novice in delight.
Long mute he stood————"

This picture is mentioned by Horace Walpole as being missed or lost from the royal collection. Either the original, or a most admirable copy, is in the possession of Sir Gerard Noel. It is the only known picture of the duchess in which the face is represented in profile, and nothing can exceed it in voluptuous beauty.

There was another picture, representing the duchess

and her son as the Madonna and Child, which was painted for a rich convent in France, and used as an altar-piece. It may account for this *not* singular piece of profaneness to remark, that the duchess was regarded at one time by the most bigoted party in France, as a chosen instrument of Heaven for the conversion of the King of England and his people.

The engraving is from the celebrated picture at Althorpe, one of the finest of all. It was painted by Lely soon after her arrival in England: it represents her as an Arcadian Bergère—

> ——"A peeress there in ermined pride,
> Is here Pastora by a fountain's side."

In the original there is an emblematical lamb, which is omitted in the engraving for want of space; the same style of beauty, striking and perfect in its way, without being intellectual or interesting, prevails through all the known portraits of this "très puissante maîtresse."

[It is said that, after having created her Duchess of Portsmouth, the King, in order to gratify her pride and quiet her pretended scruples, was married to his new mistress at the house of the Earl of Arlington,—a ceremony quite superfluous, to say nothing worse of it, as his Queen was yet living; and upon the very day of this pretended marriage, he dined with her according to the ceremony of the court, and *supped below stairs.* The duchess required this mock celebration to *save her conscience,(!)* and when she proclaimed her marriage to

the courtiers, which was on a Lord Mayor's day, at Mr. Easton's in Cheapside, where the King and his attendants usually stood, some one having said something to her discredit, she prefaced it by exclaiming in broken English, "Me no ——— ! if me thought me were, me would cut mine own throat !"

During the reigns of the two last Stuarts, we are constantly meeting with rumours of poisoning: it was a practice then fashionable in France, and the good people of England, seeing so many new fashions come in, probably thought that this fashion must also have come along with the others. We are inclined to believe in very few of the stories of this kind which contemporary, or nearly contemporary, writers have handed down to us, because, in the violent and bitter party feelings which then existed, the sudden death of a partisan was too severely felt by his friends to allow them to judge deliberately or impartially. After the death of King Charles, it was confidently reported by many that he was taken off by poison, and popular clamour accused the Duchess of Portsmouth of being implicated in the crime. Bishop Burnet reports a conversation between the duchess and a Mr. Henly of Hampshire, wherein the duchess confessed that the King had been murdered by the Popish party, and Harris,* to whom we refer our readers for further information on the subject, endeavours to show that the story was not improbable.

The story of the poisoning of Charles's sister is, un-

* Hist. of Charles II., vol. ii., p. 372.

happily, far more authentic, and our readers will, perhaps, not grudge the space occupied by the following letters of a person of quality who witnessed her death, as they give some curious details relating to the fate of Madame Henriette d'Angleterre.

Never, perhaps, was there a family so stained with a long series of crimes, and so severely punished for them in all its members, as that of the Stuarts. "Though it was notorious," says the Editor of the *Secret History of Charles the Second*,* "that she died in excruciating agonies; though it was notorious she fell a victim to her husband's jealousy; yet Charles, on receiving the news, only shed a few tears, and gave Monsieur a hard name; but desired the messenger not to divulge the secret, before a formal account was sent from France of the subject. The English ministers were directed to notify to foreign courts, that Madame did not die a violent death; and the Marshal de Bellefond, who was sent over to remove the King's suspicions, was received with singular marks of civility. It is not, perhaps, the least odious feature in Charles's portrait, that neither the fullest proofs of his sister's untimely end, nor the expressions of tenderness uttered with her dying breath, in which she declared that her only regret in leaving the world was because she left him, had the smallest effect on his callous feelings to rouse him to a returning sense of national interest, family honour, or brotherly affection."

* Secret Hist., Suppl., p. 24.

"PARIS, JUNE 30, 1670,
Four in the Morning.

"My Lord,

"I am sorry to be obliged, by my employment, to give you an account of the saddest story in the world, and which I have hardly the courage to write. Madam, on Sunday the 29th of this instant, being at St. Clou, with a great deal of company, about five o'clock in the afternoon called for a glass *chicory* water, that was prescribed her to drink, she having for two or three days after bathing found herself indisposed; she had no sooner drank this, but she cryed out she was dead, and fell into Madam Mascbourgh's arms, and desired to be put to bed, and have a confessor. She continued in the greatest tortures imaginable till three o'clock in the morning, when she dyed: the King, the Queen, and all the court being there till about an hour before.

"God send the King our master patience and constancy to bear so great an affliction. Madam declared she had no reluctancy to die, but out of the grief she thought it would be to the King her brother; and when she was in any ease, from the torture she was in, which the physicians call *Colick Bileuse*, she asked for me, and it was to charge me to say all the kind things from her to her brothers, the King and the duke. I did not leave her till she expired, and hapned to come to St. Clou an hour after she fell ill. Never any body died with that piety and resolution, and kept her senses to the last. Excuse this imperfect relation for the grief I

am in. I am sure all that had the honour to know her, will have their share for so great and general a loss.

I am, my Lord,

Yours," &c.

"PARIS, JULY 6, 1670.

"My Lord,

"This acknowledgeth two of your lordship's, the one of June 17th by Sir Henry Jones, the other of the 23rd by the post. I suppose by this time you may have with you the Marshal de Bellefond, who, besides his condolence, will endeavour, I believe, to disabuse our court of what the court and people here will never be disabused of, which is Madam's being poisoned. Which, having so good an authority as her own saying it several times in her great pains, makes the report much more credited. But to me in particular, when I asked her several times whether she thought herself poisoned, she would answer nothing; I believe being willing to spare the addition of so great a trouble to the King our master; which was the reason why, in my first letter, I made no mention of it: neither am I physician good enough to say she was poisoned or she was not. They are willing, in this countrey, to make me the author of the report, I mean Monsieur, who says, I do it to break the good intelligence between the two crowns.

"The King and ministers here seem extremely affected with the loss of Madam, and I do not doubt but they are, for they hoped, upon her consideration, to bring the King our master to condescend to things, and enter into

a friendship with this crown, stricter, perhaps, than they think he will now she is no more. What was begun, or what was intended, I will not presume to search into, since your lordship did not think fit to communicate the least part of it to me; but I cannot help knowing the town talk, and I dare answer that all that the King our master can propose will be granted here, to have his friendship; and there is nothing, on the other side, the Dutch will not do to hinder our joining with the French. All I desire to know, my lord, is, that whilst I am here, I may know what language to hold in conversation with the other ministers, that I may not be ridiculous with the character I have upon me. Whilst Madam was alive, she did me the honour to trust me enough to hinder me from being exposed to that misfortune.

"I am sure, for the little time you knew her in England, you could not but know her enough to regret her as long as you live; as I am sure you have reason; for I never knew any body kinder, nor have a better opinion of another, in all kinds, than she had of you. And I believe she loved the King her brother too well, if she had not been persuaded how well and faithfully you served him, to have been so really concerned for you, as I have observed her to be, upon all occasions, since there has been a good understanding between you. As for my own particular, I have had so great a loss, that I have no joy in this countrey, nor hopes of any in another. Madam, after several discourses with me in her illness, which was all nothing but kind expressions

of the King our master, at last told me she was extremely sorry she had done nothing for me before she died, in return of all the zeal and affection with which I had served her, since my being here. She told me that there were six thousand pistoles of hers in several places: she bid me take them for her sake. I told her she had many poor servants that wanted more than I; that I never served out of interest, and that absolutely I would not take it; but, if she pleased to tell me which of them I should give it to, I would dispose of it according to her pleasure. She had so much presence of mind as to name them to me by their names; but the breath was no sooner out of her body, but Monsieur seized all her keys and cabinets. I enquired, next day, where the money was; one of her women said it was in such a place, which hapned to be the first six thousand pistoles the King our master sent her. For just as that money came, it was designed to unpawn some jewels, upon which she had already taken up some money; but two days before, the King of France gave her money, with which she unpawned them, so the money came clear in to her.

"I demanded the money upon this from Monsieur, as money of mine that was borrowed for Madam, it having been delivered by my servant to two of her women, who assured him, as they could not do otherways, that that money came from me, for they never knew that the King our master sent it her. Monsieur had in this time got away above half of the money; the rest I had delivered me, which I did, to the utmost farthing, in the

presence of my Lord Abbot Montague and two other witnesses, dispose to Madam's servants equally, as he directed. Monsieur has promised me the rest, which they are to have in the same manner; but if they are not wise enough to keep their councel, he will certainly take it from them. I could not have got it for the poor people any other way, and I believe the King will be gladder they have it, than Monsieur. I desire you will let the King know this for my discharge, and let it go no further. Sir George Hamilton was a witness of the thing, with my Lord Abbot Montague. I thought fit to trouble your lordship with this account, which is all at present from,

My Lord,

Yours."

"P. S. Since the writing of this, I am told, from very good hands, and one that Monsieur trusts, that he being desired by the King to deliver up all Madam's papers, before he would do it, he first sent for my Lord Abbot Montague to read them, and interpret them to him; but not trusting enough to him, he employed other persons that understood the language to do it, amongst which Madam de Fienne was one; so that most of the private things between the King and Madam are and will be very publick: there were some things in cyphers, which trouble him extremely, of the King our master, for having a confidence with Madam, and treating things with her, without his knowledge. My Lord Abbot Montague will, I hope, give you a larger account of this matter than I can; for, tho' Monsieur enjoined him

secrecy to all the world, it cannot extend to you, if there be any thing that concerns the King our master's affairs."

To the King.

"PARIS, JULY 15, 1670.

"Sir,

"I ought to begin with begging your majesty's pardon for saying any thing to you upon so sad a subject, and where I had the misfortune to be a witness of the cruellest and most generous end any person in the world ever made. I had the honour, on the Saturday, which was the day before Madam dyed, to entertain conversation with her a great while; the most of her discourse being concerning Monsieur, and how impossible she saw it was for her to live happily with him, for he was fallen out with her worse than ever, because that two days before she had been at Versailles, and there he found her talking privately with the King, about affairs which were not fit to be communicated to him. She told me your majesty and the King here were both resolved upon a war with Holland, as soon as you could be agreed on the manner of it. These were the last words I had the honour to have from her till she fell ill, for Monsieur came in and interrupted her, and I returned to Paris the next day. When she fell ill, she called for me two or three times: Madam de Mechelburgh sent for me; as soon as I came in, she told me, 'You see the sad condition I am in; I am going to die; how I pity the King my brother! for I am sure he loses the person in the world that loves him best.' A little while after she called me again, bidding me be sure to

say all the kind things in the world from her to the King her brother, and thank him for all his kindness and care of me. Then she asked me if I remembered what she had said to me, the night before, of your majesty's intentions to joyn with France against Holland. I told her, yes; 'Pray then, said she, tell my brother I never persuaded him to it out of my own interest, or to be more considered in this countrey; but because I thought it for his honour and advantage: for I always loved him above all things in the world, and have no regret to leave it, but because I leave him.' She called to me several times to be sure to say this to you, and spoke to me in English. I asked her then if she believed herself poisoned: her confessor that was by, understood that word, and told her, 'Madam, you must accuse nobody, but offer up your death to God as a sacrifice;' so she would never answer me to that question, tho' I asked her several times, but would only shrink up her shoulders. I asked for her casket, where all her letters were, to send them to your majesty: she bid me take it from Madam de Borde; but she was swounding and dying to see her mistress in that condition, and before she came to herself, Monsieur had seized on them. She recommended to you to help, as much as you could, all her poor servants: she bid me write to my Lord Arlington, to put you in mind of it, 'and tell the King my brother, I hope he will, for my sake, do for him what he promised; *car c'est un home qui l'ayme, et qui le sert bien.*' She spoke afterwards a great deal in French aloud, bemoaning and lamenting the condition she knew your majesty would be in, when you heard the news of

her death. I humbly beg again your majesty's pardon for having been the unfortunate teller of so sad news; there being none of your servants that wishes your content and happiness with more zeal and truth, than

Sir,

Your Majesty's."

"PARIS, JULY 15, 1670.

"My Lord,

"I have, according to your lordship's directions, sent you here inclosed the ring, which Madam had on her finger when she dyed; which your lordship will be pleased to present to his majesty. I have taken the liberty myself to give him an account of some things that Madam gave me in charge, presuming your lordship would, out of modesty, be glad to be spared the telling his majesty them yourself; there being some things that concern you. There has been ever since Madam's death, as you may imagine upon these occasions, various reports, that of her being poisoned prevailing above all the rest, which has disordered the ministers here, as well as the King, to the greatest degree that can be. For my own particular, I have been so struck with it, that I have hardly had the heart to stir out since; which joined with the reports of the town, how much the King our master resented so horrid a fact, that he would not receive Monsieur's letter, and that he had commanded me home, made them conclude that the King our master was dissatisfied with this court, to the degree it was reported. So that to-day, when I was at St. Germains, from whence I am newly returned, to

say all the kind things in the world from her to the King her brother, and thank him for all his kindness and care of me. Then she asked me if I remembered what she had said to me, the night before, of your majesty's intentions to joyn with France against Holland. I told her, yes; 'Pray then, said she, tell my brother I never persuaded him to it out of my own interest, or to be more considered in this countrey; but because I thought it for his honour and advantage: for I always loved him above all things in the world, and have no regret to leave it, but because I leave him.' She called to me several times to be sure to say this to you, and spoke to me in English. I asked her then if she believed herself poisoned: her confessor that was by, understood that word, and told her, 'Madam, you must accuse nobody, but offer up your death to God as a sacrifice;' so she would never answer me to that question, tho' I asked her several times, but would only shrink up her shoulders. I asked for her casket, where all her letters were, to send them to your majesty: she bid me take it from Madam de Borde; but she was swounding and dying to see her mistress in that condition, and before she came to herself, Monsieur had seized on them. She recommended to you to help, as much as you could, all her poor servants: she bid me write to my Lord Arlington, to put you in mind of it, 'and tell the King my brother, I hope he will, for my sake, do for him what he promised; *car c'est un hon* *ne, et qui le sert bien.*' She spoke afterwards i French aloud, bemoaning and lamenting t your majesty would be in, when

[redacted]

her death. [redacted]
for having [redacted]
them [redacted]
tear [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

"My [redacted]

[redacted]
think [redacted]
had [redacted]
will [redacted]
the [redacted]
things [redacted]
[redacted]
the [redacted]
things [redacted]
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[

make those compliments you ordered me to do, I am not able to express the satisfaction that the King and every body had to know that the King our master was a little appeased, and that those reports had made no impression in his mind to the disadvantage of the French. I give you this account, my lord, that you may judge how much, in this conjuncture, they value the friendship of England, and how necessary our master's kindness is to all their designs. I do not doubt but there will be that use made of it, as may be most for the honour of the King and the good of the nation, which is the chief desire of him, who is, with all truth and sincerity,

Yours."

"My Lord,

"I am not able to write to you in my own hand, being so lame, with a fall I had in coming, that I can hardly stir either hand or arm; however, I hope in a day or two to go to St. Germains.

* "This is only to give your lordship an account, of what I believe you know already, of the Chevalier de Lorain's being permitted to come to court, and to serve in the army as a Marshal-de-Camp to the King.

"If Madam were poisoned, as few people doubt, he is looked upon by all France to have done it; and it is wondered at, by all France, that that King should have so little regard for the King of England our master, considering how insolently he always carried himself to

* This paragraph is in cypher in the original.

her when she was alive, as to permit his return. It is my duty to let you know this, to tell his majesty; and if he thinks fit to speak to the French ambassador of it, to do it vigorously; for I assure you it reflects here much upon him to suffer it."

Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond, was son to King Charles the Second, by the Duchess of Portsmouth; he was carried by his mother into France, in the reign of James, and returned to England in that of William, when he declared himself for the religion and constitution of his country.

Spring Macky describes him as "a gentleman good-natured to a fault, very well bred," with "many good things in him; an enemy to business, very credulous, well shaped, black complexion, much like King Charles:" to which Dean Swift adds, that he was "a shallow coxcomb."—Ed.]

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Engraved by C. E. Wagstaff

Mary,

First Duchess of Devonshire.

from the portrait at Hardwicke.

THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

"Fair, kind, and true, is all the argument."

SHAKSPEARE.

LADY MARY BUTLER was the youngest daughter of James, the GREAT Duke of Ormond, consequently the sister of the Countess of Chesterfield and of the gallant Lord Ossory, of whom some account has already been given. She was born in 1646, when the duke her father was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland for Charles I. Soon afterwards, in consequence of the distracted state of the country, Ormond was obliged to send his wife and children abroad. Lady Mary was then an infant about two years old, and she continued under the care of her mother, who resided privately at Caen, or at the Hague, until the Restoration. In 1662 the duke her father was again, and under happier auspices, appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; and in the same year, on the 27th of October, the whole family being once more assembled at the ancient seat of the Butlers,—Kilkenny Castle, Lady Mary was married to William Lord Cavendish, son and heir of the third Earl of Devonshire: she was then in her sixteenth year, and Lord Cavendish

about two-and-twenty. This union, according to the manners of that day, had been previously arranged between the parents on both sides; but apparently there was no reluctance on the part of the bride, still less on that of the young bridegroom, who was already as much distinguished for his gallantry and accomplishments, as she was for beauty, gentleness, and modesty. Carte, the prolix but faithful historian of the Ormond family, pauses in his narrative of great events and political revolutions, to dwell for a moment on these auspicious nuptials. He tells us that "it were more easy to imagine than to describe the vast resort of persons of distinction, especially of the relations of the family, which were drawn together by this solemnity, and the glee and satisfaction which appeared in all faces upon so joyful an occasion and so happy a change of fortune, after so many dreary years of banishment, dispersion, and confusion."

If there was one clouded brow in the chapel of Kilkenny Castle, when Lady Mary gave her hand to the young heir of the Cavendishes, it must have been that of poor Lady Chesterfield or her moody lord. Their domestic felicity was at this time not quite perfect; but the occasion on which they were assembled, the presence of the Duchess of Ormond, who had lately taken pains to reconcile her charming but giddy daughter with her "mari loup-garou," prevented any display of temper beyond a frown or a pout, and all was splendid hilarity and genuine Irish hospitality. The Duke of Ormond kept open house till Christmas, and the bridal party did not return to England till the following summer.

After her marriage, Lady Mary bore the title of Lady Cavendish during the whole of the reign of Charles II., as her husband did not succeed to the earldom till 1686.*

This noble, beautiful, and virtuous lady, as she is styled by her lord's biographers, appears to have resembled her lovely sister-in-law, Lady Ossory, in disposition as in destiny. She was united to one of the most illustrious characters of the age; but in herself of so gentle and unobtrusive a temper, so little formed for ambition or display, that she is principally interesting from the extraordinary endowments and splendid career of her husband. Lord Cavendish appears to have possessed every quality which could excite the affection and admiration of his youthful bride, and every propensity that could militate against her happiness. If it be true, as all *his* biographers assert, that they lived in uninterrupted harmony,† it is the strongest and most comprehensive eulogium that could be pronounced on *her* temper and character. We do not hear much of the lady during the first years of her marriage; but a glance at Lord Cavendish's known character and pursuits will show, that he must frequently have tried her forbearance, alarmed her affection, and pained her heart. He was uncommonly handsome and graceful, brave even to rashness; magnificent to profusion in his habits and expenditure; witty, and yet never, even in that licentious age, "forgot

* In the present time she would have been entitled Lady Mary Cavendish, being the daughter of a duke, wedded to the son of an earl.

† Dr. Kippis in the Biogr. Brit., and Dr. Kennet's Memoirs of the Cavendishes.

the distinction between the profane wit and the gentleman:"* he united an inflexible temper with an exceeding softness of manner and suavity of deportment; so that while his friends could not presume on his courtesy, his enemies could not resist the attraction of his manner. Perhaps he was married too young, for we find him leading, *after* his marriage, the life which a dissipated young noble now leads before he has made up his mind to settle down into matrimony. His love of pleasure, his passion for gambling and the race-course, and other extravagancies, appear to have frequently enraged the old earl his father, and plunged him into difficulties. Moreover, (and this looks ill for poor Lady Cavendish's domestic happiness,) we find that the King forbade him the house of Nell Gwynn, or rather forbade Nell to see him; and he was in strict intimacy with the Duke of Monmouth, Tom Thynne, Lord Dorset, and other distinguished *roués* of that time, although he does not figure in De Grammont's Memoirs; and yet, in the midst of these follies, he had qualities which must have rendered him as interesting and beloved in private, as his public career was historically glorious. His chivalrous gallantry often gave his wife occasion to tremble for his life. About six years after his marriage, when Montagu was appointed ambassador to France, Lord Cavendish accompanied him to Paris; while there, he was one evening on the stage of the Opera,† when some

* This was said of him by Dryden.

† Both in the English and the French theatres, a part of the audience were at this time admitted on the stage, and sometimes mingled pell-mell with the players.

young officers of the royal guard came on, flushed with wine and insolence: one of them addressed to him an insulting question, which Lord Cavendish immediately answered with a blow: the whole party then drew their swords, and rushed upon him; he set his back against one of the side-scenes, and defended himself for some time with the utmost bravery, but after receiving several wounds, he must have been overpowered by numbers, and probably murdered on the spot, if a Swiss in Montagu's service, a man of uncommon strength and stature, had not suddenly caught him in his arms and flung him into the pit:—he was thus saved; but in the fall one of the iron spikes caught his arm, and tore it severely. His conduct on this occasion, which was quite that of a hero of romance, gave him considerable éclat, not only at Paris, but through all Europe; and when Louis XIV. ordered his cowardly assailants to be put under arrest, Cavendish crowned his exploit by generously interceding for their pardon.*

His challenge to Count Koningsmark, who had been acquitted, (in defiance of the most damning proofs,) of the murder of his friend Thynne, was in the same spirit.

* *Vide* Sir William Temple's Letters to him, and Kennet's Memoirs of the Cavendishes. Sir William thus writes: "I can assure your lordship, all that can be said to your advantage upon this occasion is the common discourse here, and not disputed by the French themselves; who say you have been as generous in excusing your enemies, as brave in defending yourself. The Dutch will have it, that you have been the first in excess; and say, that such a thing as seven or eight falling upon one, would never have been done in any other place but France, nor suffered neither by the rest of the company."—*Sir William Temple's Letters*, vol. i., p. 70.

He offered to meet the count in any part of the world, charge the guilt of blood upon him, and prove it with his sword; but that libertine and fanfaron avoided the encounter.*

To the valour and bearing of a paladin of old romance, Lord Cavendish added the spirit of an ancient Roman. While his gallantry and love of pleasure brought him into constant association with some of the wildest profligates of the court, his ardent love of liberty, his enlightened views of policy, his lofty principles of honour and patriotism, kept him constantly in opposition to the crooked and despotic measures of the government.†

He and Lord Russell were considered as leaders of the Whig party; and when his heroic friend was persecuted to death by a venal and dissolute court, Cavendish, with his characteristic gallantry, was ready to run all risks for his deliverance: he offered to change clothes with him in prison, and thus effect his escape; and when this was declined, it was his intention to have waylaid the cavalcade on the road to execution with a troop of armed friends, and to have rescued Lord Russell by open force. But Lord Russell declared, that he

* See vol. ii., p. 4, of this work.

† Lord Cavendish would have been esteemed a *liberal* even in these liberal days, and considering the times in which he lived, we must wonder at the boldness of some of the articles of his political creed: he was of opinion that Parliament should be triennial, and openly complained (when in the House of Peers) that "a little dirty borough might be bought for a certain price, as easily as a bullock at Smithfield!" He desired they would inscribe on his tomb, "Here lies William Cavendish, the loyal subject of good princes, a hater of tyrants, and by them hated."

would not suffer his friends to risk their lives for his sake; and that having submitted to the decision of the laws, he was ready to endure the penalty. Lord Cavendish took leave of his friend as he was led out to death, and Lord Russell, after bidding him farewell, turned back, and in a few energetic words, entreated him to reform his libertine course of life, and reflect ere it was too late. Lord Cavendish made no answer, but wrung his hand, and burst into a flood of tears.

These last words of his noble friend probably made a salutary impression on the mind and character of Lord Cavendish. We find him thenceforward more retired from the court, living a good deal on his estates, and devoting much of his time to state affairs: he is one of the very few public characters of Charles's time who can be contemplated with unmingled satisfaction. And while "our youth, all livery'd o'er with foreign gold," were contending for the notice and favour of an arrogant mistress, and our statesmen were selling themselves and betraying each other, Cavendish recalls us to the spirit of classic times:—"It had been as easy to turn the sun from his course, as Fabricius from the path of honour!"*

These things are matters of history, and are only mentioned here to give some idea of what the wife of such a man ought to have been, and ought to have felt. It is mortifying that we know so little relating to her personal habits; that there is so little mention made of her in the panegyrics on her husband; and that the

* The celebrated exclamation of King Pyrrhus.

epithets, noble, beautiful, and virtuous, must comprise all that can be said concerning her.* Yet this is perhaps the most significant praise of her character, as well as the most satisfactory evidence of her general contented and tranquil existence. The crimes or miseries of women make a noise in the world; their virtues and their happiness alike seek the shade. From the few allusions to Lady Cavendish, we may judge that she had sense enough to be proud of her husband, and affection enough to pardon his follies; that she was domestic, of a most affectionate disposition, attached to her own family, and tenderly devoted to her children. In the first years of her marriage, when she appeared at court so very young, and with all the advantages of birth and beauty, a safeguard was formed around her in the virtues of her nearest connexions. Her own admirable mother, the Duchess of Ormond, and her aunt, Lady Hamilton, lived revered and respected in the court. Her lovely sister-in-law, Lady Ossory, and her cousin, Miss Hamilton, were among its chief ornaments. The catastrophe of her sister, Lady Chesterfield, though not necessary as a warning, probably contributed, with other causes, to render her guarded in her conduct. Her mother-in-law, the Countess of Devonshire,† with whom

* See Lady Russell's Letters.

† Lady Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of the Earl of Exeter. There is a lovely picture of her by Vandyke at Burleigh-House; and another, either a duplicate or a good copy, at Hardwick. When her son, Lord Devonshire, was fined thirty thousand pounds for pulling Colonel Culpeper's nose within the verge of the court, "his mother, the countess, who had long absented herself from court, made her appearance in the circle, and saying she was come to discharge her son's fine, humbly desired that his majesty would accept of her delivering up bonds and

she chiefly resided when in the country, seldom came to London; she was an excellent and amiable woman, and had been a celebrated beauty in her day:—while Lord Cavendish's grandmother, the Countess-dowager,* who lived for fourteen years after his marriage, was really one of the most extraordinary and celebrated women of the time. She preserved in her old age the talents, vivacity, and active habits of business which had distinguished her youth, resided almost constantly in or near London,† and her house was the resort of wits, poets, statesmen,—in short, it was the Holland-House of that day. The King frequently dined with her in the beginning of his reign; and her exertions in the royal cause, her correctness of conduct, and her commanding intellect, rendered her an object of general respect. Among these family connexions, Lady Cavendish must have passed many years of her life, fulfilling her various duties with a blameless dignity. Her eldest son, William, was born in 1672; her second son, Henry, in 1673, and she had a daughter and another son born previous to 1680.‡ In 1684, Lord Cavendish succeeded to his fa-

other acknowledgments for above sixty thousand pounds, lent by her husband and his mother to his royal father and brother in their greatest extremities." This was refused, but the decree was afterwards reversed as illegal and unjust.

* Christian Bruce, daughter of Edward Lord Bruce. It has been the destiny of the noble house of Cavendish to be allied almost from generation to generation to remarkable women; and of these, Christian, second countess, was one of the most remarkable: she had all the good qualities of the celebrated Bess of Hardwick, of Elizabeth's time, and none of her failings.

† At Roehampton.

‡ The dates of their birth do not appear. See one of Lady Russell's

ther's titles and estates, and became fourth Earl of Devonshire: and, during the reign of James, both he and the countess absented themselves almost entirely from court. The earl was deeply involved in all the secret measures which led to the Revolution. Yet, in the midst of these plots, and while his liberty and even his head were in danger, he amused himself with building and improving his noble seat at Chatsworth, the principal front of which was erected by him as it now stands. In the beginning of the eventful year 1688, he came up to London to complete the arrangements for the marriage of his eldest son with the eldest daughter of his friend Lord Russell. Lord Cavendish was not then quite seventeen, and the bride about fifteen. Within two months after their nuptials, in August 1688, he sent his son abroad to travel for his improvement, perhaps also to be out of the way of the approaching troubles. The bride remained at Woburn, under the care of her mother, Lady Russell; and Lady Devonshire retired to Chatsworth, while the Revolution was effected, in which the earl took so distinguished a share.

In February 1689, when William and Mary were proclaimed King and Queen, we find the Countess of Devonshire present at their first drawing-room, when she presented her daughter-in-law to the Queen. The lively and *naïve* letter of the young Lady Cavendish on

letters, written in 1685, in which she mentions that on occasion of a fire, (at Montagu-House,) Lady Devonshire's youngest boy was brought by his nurse, wrapt up in a blanket, and put to bed with her own son.—Letters, p. 89.

this occasion, addressed to her "*beloved Sylvia*,"* gives the following account of her reception at court:—"You may imagine I was very much pleased to see Ormanzor and Phenixana, (*i. e.* William and Mary,) proclaimed King and Queen of England, in the room of King James, my father's murderer. There was wonderful acclamations of joy, which, though they were very pleasing to me, yet frightened me too; for I could not but think what a dreadful thing it is to fall into the hands of the rabble,—they are such a strange sort of people. At night I went to court with my Lady Devonshire, and kissed the Queen's hands and the King's also," &c.: in another part of the letter she says, with amusing *naïveté*, that when the deputation from Parliament waited on William and Mary to offer the crown, "the Prince answered them in a few words, and the Princess made curtsies."† In truth, it was rather an embarrassing situation for the daughter, who had come over to ascend her father's throne. But in this case, as in others, "silence spoke consent."

After the Revolution, the Earl of Devonshire was, in

* These sentimental designations, taken from the French romances, were fashionable at the time and long afterwards.—See the *Spectator* in many places.

† See the whole letter, printed in the Life of Lady Russell, prefixed to the letters of her husband. There is a lovely picture of young Lady Cavendish, the writer of the above letter, in the gallery at Hardwick; the lips are full and red, and a little pouting; there is something very fine and patrician-like in the turn of the head, and the whole air and expression. She was afterwards the second Duchess of Devonshire. Her young husband returned from his travels in the beginning of the year 1690; they afterwards lived happily together, and she became the mother of nine children.

consideration of his great services, created Duke of Devonshire and Marquis of Hartington; and after filling some of the highest offices in the state, he died in 1707. The duchess survived him about three years: and having lived to see around her a numerous family of hopeful grandchildren, she died at Devonshire-House, July 31, 1710, at the age of sixty-eight, and was buried near her father in Westminster Abbey.

William, her eldest son, was the second Duke of Devonshire; her second son, Lord Henry Cavendish, a young man of uncommon talents and merit, and infinitely beloved by his family, died in the life-time of his mother, in his twenty-seventh year. He left one daughter, who was married to the seventh Earl of Westmoreland.

The Duchess of Devonshire's third son, Lord James Cavendish, of Stayley Park, died in 1751. Her only daughter, Lady Elizabeth, married Sir John Wentworth, of Broadsworth, in Yorkshire.

The accompanying portrait has been engraved after the original picture in the gallery at Hardwick, where there are also several portraits of her gallant, accomplished, and illustrious husband; one of these, which represents him on horseback in full dress *à la Louis Quatorze*, is a confused but imposing mass of wig and embroidery; but all the portraits, however various in merit or costume, agree in one point,—they are all eminently handsome and dignified—in the noblest style of manly beauty.

BOSTON
ATHENÆUM

Engraved from a Painting at
Althrop

MISS JENNINGS,

AFTERWARDS DUCHESS OF TYRCONNEL.

"Say, why are Beauties praised and honour'd most?
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
Why deck'd with all that land or sea afford?
Why angels call'd, and angel-like adored?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless good sense preserve what Beauty gains!"

POPE.

WHEN the Duchess of York found herself under the necessity of reforming her establishment of honourable handmaidens, she was resolved not to leave the selection of her new attendants to chance or interest, but to depend on her own taste alone, and listen to no recommendations which were not presented in person. Her choice fell on Miss Temple, Miss Jennings, and Miss Churchill: we will discuss the last-mentioned first.

Hamilton, who has done for the court of Charles II. what Ovid did for that of Olympus,—revealed to mocking mortals "all the laughing scandal of the lower sky," has treated Miss Churchill with peculiar malice, and

even denied her any pretensions to that beauty which she certainly did possess, if her portraits may be trusted. She was the eldest sister of him who was afterwards the GREAT Duke of Marlborough, but at this time merely an ensign in the Guards, and page of honour to the Duke of York. When they were first introduced to the court, about the year 1664, Arabella Churchill was sixteen, and her brother about fourteen years old; and certain scandal-mongers affirm, that young Churchill's rapid promotion was owing to his sister's *promotion* in a different sense. She captivated the Duke of York more by the charms of her figure and manner, than her face; and she had not virtue enough to resist his importunities, or wit enough to make the best conditions for herself; but having, unhappily, forfeited her place and title of Maid of Honour, did not seek to parade or ennoble her degradation. She was the mother of four children by the duke; her eldest son, James Fitz-James, was the famous Marshal Duc de Berwick, one of the greatest military characters of the last century; and one of her daughters married the first Earl of Waldegrave. Arabella Churchill afterwards married Colonel Godfrey of the Jewel-office, with whom she lived in the utmost harmony, and was respected for the correctness of her conduct and her domestic virtues.

She died in 1730, at the great age of eighty-two, having survived her lover, husband, and her children. The feelings and situation of this woman, about the beginning of the last century, when the sovereign who had loved her had been tumbled from his throne, and

was living a poor exile,—when her husband was serving against him,—when her brother was opposed to the armies of Louis XIV., and her not less illustrious son defending the interests of that monarch in Spain,—must have been strange and interesting.

> "Which is the side that I must go withal?
> I am with all: each army hath a hand—
> Whoever wins on that side shall I lose—
> Assured loss before the match be played!"

Miss Temple and Miss Jennings were of different metal,—metal purer as well as more attractive. Anne Temple, the eldest of the two, was the daughter of a Warwickshire gentleman of ancient family; she was beautiful, something of a brunette in complexion, had a slight graceful figure, fine teeth, with a peculiar softness in her eye and smile. Her disposition was gentle and confiding, but vain and credulous; in short, Miss Temple, thrown among the shoals and quicksands of the court, seemed destined either to sink ingloriously, or make an illustrious shipwreck of her maiden honour.

> "How each pirate eyes
> So weak a vessel and so rich a prize!"

But she is a proof that simplicity and purity of mind are, in certain cases, a better safeguard than pride, or wit, or cunning: in spite of the predictions of those who had watched her *début* and knew something of her character; in spite of the machinations of Rochester, who laid siege to her with equal art and audacity, Miss Temple came off victorious; for in this case escape was victory. After being in the service of the Duchess of York for about two years, she married Sir Charles Lyt-

telton, who had lately returned from the government of Jamaica, and had greatly distinguished himself during the civil wars by his loyalty and military talents. Sir Charles was nearly forty, the lady not more than eighteen; yet the union proved in all respects happy. She was the mother of thirteen children: the rest of her life was spent almost entirely at Hagley, where she died in 1718. It is curious that her son Sir Thomas Lyttelton also married a Miss Temple, who was a Maid of Honour,* but no relation to his mother's family; and her grandson was the first and celebrated Lord Lyttelton.

Last came the heroine of our last memoir,—the fair, the elegant, the fascinating Frances Jennings; she who moved through the glittering court "in unblenched majesty;" who robbed the men of their hearts, the women of their lovers, and never lost herself! The very model of an intellectual coquette; perhaps a little too wilful, a little too wary for a perfect woman; but in the flush and bloom of early youth, and in the dangerous situation in which she was now placed, the first of these qualities was only an additional charm, the last a necessary safeguard. As to hearts and such things,—to bring them to Charles's court was mere work of supererogation; it was like trading to the South-sea islands with diamonds and ingots of gold, where glass beads and tinfoil bear just the same value, and answered quite as well.

Frances Jennings was the eldest of the three daughters, coheirs, of Richard Jennings, Esq. of Sunbridge,

* Christian Temple, daughter of Sir Richard Temple of Stow, ancestor to the Duke of Buckingham.

near St. Albans: her mother was Frances Thornhurst, daughter of Sir Gifford Thornhurst, a Kentish baronet. If we may give any credit whatever to the *on dits* of that time, the mother of Miss Jennings was more remarkable for her beauty than her discretion. Of the two other daughters, Barbara became the wife of Mr. Griffiths, a man of large fortune, and of her we hear no more. Sarah, who was younger than Frances by twelve or fourteen years, became the famous Duchess of Marlborough.

Miss Jennings was about sixteen when she was appointed Maid of Honour to the Duchess of York. She had no sooner made her appearance in the court circle, than she was at once proclaimed "oltre le belle, bella!" Over Miss Hamilton and Miss Stuart she had the advantage of youth and novelty, and over the others every advantage of mind and person. Her form was that of a young Aurora, newly descended to the earth; she never moved without discovering some new charm, or developing some new grace. Her eyes and hair were light, and her complexion transcendently fair; but the rich profusion of her long tresses, the animated bloom upon her cheek, and the varying expression of her countenance and smile, left her nothing of that *fadeur* which often accompanies exceeding fairness of complexion. Her mouth, as Hamilton tells us, was not perhaps the smallest, but was certainly the loveliest mouth in the world. But Nature, in forming this exquisite *chef d'œuvre*, had in mercy to mankind left part of her handiwork imperfect. Some critics declared that the

tip of her nose was not *de la dernière délicatesse;* that her hands and arms were not quite worthy of the small foot and delicate ankle; and it was admitted that her eyes were not quite as perfect as her mouth. To her external attractions, Miss Jennings added what was rarely met with in the court of Charles,—all the witchery of mind, and all the dignity of virtue. Her conversation and deportment were alike irresistible, from a just and delightful mixture of softness and sprightliness. A little petulance and caprice of temper; a little heedlessness of manner; a good deal of her sex's pride, yet more vanity; a quickness of imagination which sometimes hurried her to the very verge of an imprudence, and a natural acuteness and readiness of wit which as often extricated her,—

"Yielding by nature, stubborn but for fame;"

such, in early youth, was the character of La Belle Jennings.

No sooner had the Duke of York beheld this fair frigate sailing in the wake of his consort, than he regarded her, as did others, as his predestinate and lawful prize, upon the principle which his brother Charles had created into "a right divine," viz.—that his wife's Maids of Honour were bound to *his* service as well as hers. The duke preferred his suit, and found, to his unspeakable surprise, that Miss Jennings did not subscribe to his favourite doctrine of non-resistance. His highness, who seems to have made love "avec toute la grâce d'une chénille qui se traine sur les roses," paraded his awk-

ward devotion without scruple or disguise. He began by opening a battery of glances,—Miss Jennings looked another way. He next found words of pretty plain import,—Miss Jennings was either deaf, or most respectfully slow of comprehension. His presents were as ill received as his protestations, and his magnificent promises excited only a smile,—beautiful indeed, but without even an accompanying blush to soften its provoking —its poignant significancy,

The duke could not believe in his own defeat. It is true, he had lately brooked a repulse from the high-born, high-minded Miss Hamilton, who had the blood of half the nobility in her veins; but the spirit of this daughter of a country squire was an unheard-of assumption. "Que faire pour apprivoiser une impertinente vertu qui ne voulait point entendre raison?" He next tried the effect of billets-doux, and finding there was no other way to ensure their reception, he became his own Mercury. Day after day he contrived to insinuate into the fair lady's pocket, or into her muff, notes in the usual style,—prodigal of oaths, vows, promises. As etiquette did not allow Miss Jennings to fling them back in his highness's face, she affected perfect unconsciousness, and only waiting till he turned away, carelessly drew out her handkerchief, or shook her muff, and, lo! a shower of royal billets-doux; which fell around her for the edification of whoever might choose to pick them up.* The gentlemen wondered; the ladies tittered;

* Miss Jennings here recalls to mind a story told, I believe, by Madame de Sévigné. One of the French princes of the blood having ad-

the poor duchess,* who, in her adventitious elevation, sighed, and "was no duchess at her heart," could not but forgive an impertinence which avenged her. The duke, angry and disconcerted, but too cold and proud to persist in a suit which only rendered him ridiculous, carried his "lourds hommages" to the feet of Miss Churchill, and found that she at least was inclined "to listen to reason."

The fame of Miss Jennings now spread from St. James's to Whitehall;† so much beauty, so much vivacity, and so much discretion, appeared incomprehensible. The King himself was piqued to enter the lists, merely, as he said, to convince himself that it was to the unskilful tactics of the gentleman, not to the virtue of the lady, that this marvel was to be attributed. He set himself, therefore, first half seriously, and then in very resolute earnest, to study Miss Jennings's fortifications. What might have been the event, history may not presume to guess; but, apparently, his progress was not encouraging, and Miss Stuart, who was then at the height of her power, was not inclined to give way to this new rival. She was seized with a fit of pouting and penitence,—dropped some hints about the Duke of Richmond, or a convent, which brought the volatile

dressed a pretty *bourgeoise* rather disrespectfully, she replied with indignation, "Pour Dieu! Monseigneur, votre Altesse a la bonté d'être trop insolente!"

* Anne Hyde.

† At this time St. James's Palace was the residence of the Duke and Duchess of York: the King held his court at Whitehall.

monarch back to his allegiance, and all the honours of his supposed discomfiture rested with Miss Jennings. Scandal was silenced by a triumph which confounded all the calculations of the most knowing in these matters. Those who had ever entertained hopes or designs unworthy of their object now shrunk aloof, despairing to succeed where a King and a Prince had failed; and honourable suitors flocked around her.

Just at this crisis, Richard Talbot returned from Ireland, whither he had gone to forget Miss Hamilton's charms and cruelty, but apparently without success. On his arrival in the court, he found Miss Jennings the last new topic of discourse. All voices were raised in admiration of her charms, and wonder at her prudence,—a prudence which so little accorded with the lively and almost too unguarded frankness of her manner.

Dick Talbot, for so he was familiarly designated, was descended from a younger branch of the Talbots of Malahide, who had been settled in Ireland since the days of Henry II. He had attended on the royal brothers in their exile, and to the Duke of York he was devotedly and blindly attached, partly from a principle of loyalty, and partly from a feeling of gratitude.

He was accounted the finest figure and the tallest man in the kingdom, and set off his noble form by a peculiar loftiness in his deportment. For his character, it seems to have combined extremes of good and ill. He

was dissipated, rapacious, boastful, overbearing; loving bold ends for the sake of their boldness; witty, generous, devoted to his friends; of great talents, headlong passions, and reckless valour.*

It had been suspected, before Talbot's departure for Ireland, that Miss Boynton, one of Queen Catherine's Maids of Honour, had indulged for him some partial and fond regards; and on his re-appearance at court, before he was introduced to Miss Jennings, the love-lorn nymph signalized her tenderness by fainting away. Talbot, as a man and an Irishman, could not behold a lady in such a pitiful case without feeling a wish to console her, particularly as Miss Boynton was really very pretty and elegant, though on the smallest and most fairy-like scale of beauty; he therefore began to pay her some attentions. Before he had proceeded beyond a few tender glances and equivocal compliments, the destinies placed Miss Jennings before him in all her unrivalled attractions; Miss Boynton was forgotten, and Miss Hamilton no longer regretted; and as modesty was not among Talbot's qualifications, he at once threw himself at her feet, and tendered himself to her acceptance.

We have reason to suppose that Miss Jennings, though something of a coquette, was *coquette par calcul*, rather

* The unfavourable character which Clarendon has drawn of Richard Talbot should be taken with much reservation, when we remember that the Chancellor *allows*, in so many words, that he was noted for having a prejudice against all the Talbots.

than by instinct. She had no desire to extend her conquests, nor to remain in a court, the dangers of which she began to comprehend; she wished to surrender honourably, and to secure a good establishment. But though the fine exterior and imposing manners of Talbot could not be disregarded, and his fortune and favour at court had due influence, his self-sufficiency seems to have a little shocked her high spirit; he was more favourably received than any former suitor, but he was not at once accepted. Talbot, who rightly thought that a woman who hesitates may be considered as won, pressed his suit with all the impetuosity of his character. The court considered them all but affianced, when a trifling circumstance destroyed his hopes when nearest their completion, and to all human probability for ever.

Miss Price, who has already been mentioned, still resided in the court; but from being a Maid of Honour, had sunk into the office of bedchamber woman to the Duchess of Cleveland. The worse than equivocal character of Miss Price was perhaps unknown to Miss Jennings, while her wit, good-humour, and conversational powers captivated her, particularly as she took every opportunity of cultivating her good graces. At that time the multifarious occupations and amusements, which women of moderate fortune and comparatively confined education now command, were unknown; and we can scarcely, in these days, estimate the value of an entertaining companion to those who had few resources and lively spirits; to those who had no taste for the *fadeurs* of the eternal French romances; as little for the excite-

ments of hunt-the-slipper and blind-man's-buff, and still less for the mysteries of chain-point and cross-stitch.*

But while Miss Jennings encouraged Miss Price's visits as a cordial against *ennui*, and became every day fonder of her society, Talbot viewed this intimacy with deep and well-founded disgust. He ventured to remonstrate, but in doing so, assumed a tone which Miss Jen-

* "Women in those days," says a lively writer, "possessed few of the means of self-amusement now in the hands of almost all the world. Music was cultivated by none but those whose strong natural taste and talent for it made them overcome all obstacles in its pursuit; drawing, or any taste for the fine arts, seems never to have been thought of, either as an employment of the hands, or a cultivation of the mind. In spite, therefore, of the numberless tapestry chairs, carpets, beds and hangings, now, for the most part, discarded in rags from the garrets of their granddaughters, an unsatisfied curiosity yet remains as to the amusements of the younger women, whose fortune and rank elevated them above the common every-day household cares of existence."

The following entry in Pepys' Diary, is extremely amusing and characteristic of the manners of the times. "We find them (the Duke and Duchess of York) at dinner in the great room, unhung; and there was with them my Lady Duchess of Monmouth, the Countess of Falmouth, Castlemaine, Henrietta Hide, my Lady Hinchingbroke's sister, and my Lady Peterborough; and, after dinner, Sir James Smith and I were invited down to dinner with some of the Maids of Honour; namely, Mrs. Ogle, Blake, and Howard, (which did me good to have the honour to dine with and look on), and the mother of the maids, and Mrs. Howard, the mother of the Maid of Honour of that name, and the duke's housekeeper here. * * * Having dined very merrily, we went up, and there I did find the Duke of York and Duchesse, with all the great ladies, sitting upon a carpet on the ground, there being no chairs, playing at 'I love my love with an A, because he is so and so; and I hate him with an A, because this and that;' and some of them, but particularly the Duchesse herself and my Lady Castlemaine, were very witty."

nings thought more suitable to a husband of ten years' standing, than a lover not yet accepted. Her high spirit was up in arms, and she received his interference with such pointed displeasure, and replied with such stinging raillery, that Talbot for awhile stood aloof in all the sullenness of offended pride. Miss Jennings, who was not very deeply in love, contrived to console herself; and poor Talbot, unable to carry on his assumed coldness, was again at her feet, all penitence and submission, but was received with such a scornful air, that he suspected a rival in the heart of his imperious mistress, and discovered him at last where he would least have expected to find him.

Le Petit Jermyn, who had been banished from the court on account of the Duchess of Cleveland, had lately re-appeared, and absence had not dissipated the dazzling halo with which fashion and fancy had arrayed his empty head and insignificant person.

This prince of coxcombs cast his eyes on Miss Jennings. She was young, with little experience, and much vanity: to bring to her feet a man who was *le terreur des maris, et le fleau des amans,*—the desperation of men and the perdition of women,—seemed a conquest worthy of her; and in the effort to fix this formidable rake, her own feelings became entangled before she was aware. The thinking part of the court, (if indeed there were any there who thought,) wondered to see the proud, the fair, the elegant Frances Jennings caught in so flimsy a net; and Jermyn plumed himself, as he justly might, on

the preference of one so lovely, and hitherto so circumspect. Meantime the Duchess of York began to feel a real and affectionate interest for Miss Jennings; and as she had refused the protection of the duke, her own, in the fullest sense of the word, she was now resolved to extend to her. She spoke to Jermyn herself, who declared that his intentions towards Miss Jennings were strictly honourable. The duchess failed not to publish his reply; and Miss Jennings was congratulated on having reduced the invincible Jermyn to matrimony and good behaviour. Talbot, enraged at the levity of his mistress, yet more enraged by the contemptible rival she had given him, withdrew, after an ineffectual attempt to win back her heart: in a moment of pique he offered himself to the languishing Miss Boynton, and was accepted.

Whether Miss Jennings heard of this with perfect indifference may be doubted; but Jermyn was heir to an earldom, and twenty thousand a-year,* and moreover was very much in love—or seemed so: she therefore consoled herself; only she wondered not a little why the gentleman did not press for the possession of a hand which waited but the formal question to be bestowed on him, in her heart contrasting his nonchalance with the ardour and assurance of Talbot. Still, as day after day passed, her wonder grew; and as her wonder grew, her love declined.

It was now that Rochester put in practice that cele-

* He was heir to his uncle, the rich old Earl of St. Albans.

brated frolic, so amusingly related in De Grammont, and so gravely recorded by his biographer Bishop Burnet.* Being forbidden the court, he assumed the disguise of a German astrologer and physician, and undertook to reveal the past and future to all whom curiosity or credulity might lead to his enchanted den, somewhere near the precincts of Drury-lane.† Rochester's wit and self-possession, and his knowledge of all the private scandal of the town, gave him an advantage over all the conjurors before or since. The fame of his extraordinary revelations reached the court, and spread astonishment and consternation through the whole tribe of abigails: even the Maids of Honour began to flutter with wonder, curiosity, and apprehension. Miss Price failed not to entertain her young friend with all the gossip concerning this astrologer; and as she talked, Miss Jennings grew pensive. She was seized with a violent inclination to consult this wonderful man, who might, perhaps, be able to explain what appeared so inexplicable in the conduct of her lover. Her precious confidante assured her that nothing was more easy; and after some consultation, they agreed to dress themselves up as orange-girls, in hoods and serge petticoats, and

* *Vide* Life and Death of Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. The same freak was played by Sir Francis Delaval in the last century.—See the Life of Mr. Edgeworth.

† The neighbourhood of Drury-lane was then the fashionable part of the town, and Bow-street, Covent-garden, was the Bond-street of that day, the lounge and resort of all the wits and the beaux. Dryden somewhere mentions a lady as overwhelmed with billets-doux from Bow-street; on which Sir Walter Scott observes, that, in these latter times, a billet-doux from Bow-street would be much more alarming than flattering.

each a basket under her arm, and thus proceed to the den of the magician. To disguise the round vulgar figure of Miss Price was not difficult; but the distinguished air of Miss Jennings, whose figure and step were those of a young wood-nymph, could scarcely be concealed by any costume. Like the goddess in the Eneid, whose gait betrayed her through her mortal guise, so this "fair young celestial" stood revealed through her homely attire. Though perfectly conscious of her own attractions, of this natural consequence of superior beauty she was unhappily unconscious, and the two damsels errant set forth boldly. They made their way from St. James's, through the Park, to Charing-cross, got into a hackney-coach, and desired the man to drive to the residence of the conjuror.

On their way they passed the theatre, called then the Duke's-House, where the Queen and the Duchess of York were seated in state. Miss Price, whose spirits were raised to a wild pitch of extravagance, was of opinion that it would infinitely add to the jest of their escapade, if they were to alight, and offer their oranges for sale under the Duchess of York's box. To this Miss Jennings consented; but just at the entrance of the lobby they encountered Le Beau Sydney, who was hastening to pay his court to the duchess.* He passed them, humming an air and combing his voluminous wig, too much occupied with his own graces to notice those which lurked under the little hood, and were now

* He was said at the time to be in love with the Duchess of York, or she with him.—See Pepys.

averted from his gaze. Not so Killigrew, who next advanced: he was struck at once by the nymph-like gait and air which broke through all disguise, and accosted the pretended orange-girl with a freedom which at once offended and terrified her. She began to think that she might sell her oranges too dear; and Miss Price, observing that her indignation would betray her if her fears did not, drew her away in haste. They escaped through the crowd; and calling another hackney-coach, they again set forward, like Britomart and Glaucé of old,* "disguised in base attire," to seek the cave of Merlin.

Miss Jennings, whose courage was by this time oozing from the tips of the pretty fingers, still trembled with recent agitation when the coach stopped. Miss Price, whose mind was rather more disengaged, beheld, as she looked up, a pair of eyes fixed on them with a sort of exulting and malignant leer which made her blood run cold: they were the very last she would have chosen to meet on such an occasion,—those of the witty, insolent, cynical, profligate Brounker; who, being one of the Duke of York's equerries, was perfectly well acquainted with them both. Miss Price, in her fright, desired the coachman to drive on, and set them down a few yards in advance. Brounker, whose curiosity was strongly excited, followed with the perseverance of a sleuth hound. The coach-door opened. Miss Jennings first stepped out; and, to his astonishment, an exquisite little foot, in an embroidered slipper, was disclosed from beneath the coarse serge petticoat. They now stood completely betrayed,

* Faerie Queene, book iii., canto iii.

and the cynical Brounker was enchanted by the discovery. He entertained the most degrading opinion of the sex generally; and in proportion as the modesty and prudence of Miss Jennings had hitherto disconcerted all his preconceived notions on the subject, was his delight to find her (as he supposed) "no better than one of those to whom the vulgar give bold titles." He addressed them, therefore, in their assumed characters with so much freedom and insolence, that Miss Jennings lost the little self-possession which remained to her, and Miss Price herself knew not which way to look. While Brounker enjoyed and prolonged their embarrassment, some little blackguards in the street began to steal their oranges; the hackney-coachman thought it incumbent on him to protect his fare, and a squabble ensued. A crowd collected; and the hateful Brounker, having just waited to see them in almost inextricable distress and confusion, and without an attempt to rescue them, glided away through the crowd, exulting in the idea of the exposure he anticipated. The terrified damsels, abandoning their oranges to the enemy, scrambled into their coach and returned to the palace; Miss Jennings lamenting her imprudence, and declaring that nothing should induce her to proceed, and Miss Price reviling the stars, as "more in fault than they."

The malice of Brounker was so far disappointed, that though the story got abroad, and was related with the usual malicious exaggeration, it fixed no stigma on Miss Jennings; who, probably, on seeing the dilemma in which she was placed, had sense enough and wit enough

to join in the laugh at her own folly. It appears that the duchess pardoned her *étourderie*.* We hear no more of Miss Price and her dangerous visits, and Jermyn continued his attentions in a manner which kept all competitors at a distance, but still without proposing that critical and definitive question which his impatient mistress longed to hear.

While week after week thus passed, and Miss Jennings fretted at her lover's unaccountable and capricious delays, the government planned an expedition to the coast of Guinea, and the command was given to Prince Rupert. The fame of the leader, and the dangers of the expedition, fired the imagination of the young cavaliers; and all who wished to give themselves *éclat* in the eyes of the public or their mistresses, volunteered to follow the prince. Amongst others, to the astonishment of the whole court, Jermyn asked and obtained permission to serve in this expedition. Such a step, taken at such a time, without the slightest reference to her wishes, or any explanation on his part, appeared to Miss Jennings equally ridiculous and insulting. It at once dissipated all illusion, and cured her of a passion which was more a fancy than a feeling. Jermyn, whose heartless coxcombry could not estimate the value of the heart with which he trifled, and who enjoyed the idea of calling up some tender tears of regret into the eyes of his fair one, waited on her to impart his warlike pro-

* This adventure occurred about the beginning of February 1665, as appears from Pepys' Diary, where it is mentioned incidentally among the gossip of the day.—Vol. i., p. 331.

jects, and had prepared himself to resist, most heroically, her despair and her terrors at the dangers to which he was about to expose his valuable person; but, instead of finding a dishevelled Ariadne, he was much surprised when the high-spirited Jennings received him with a smile, rallied him with the most poignant wit on his sudden love of glory, and then giving him to understand that she considered this as a final farewell, and had not the slightest wish to see him again, she civilly wished him *bon voyage*, and curtsied him out of the room.

Not satisfied with this private vengeance, she composed a ludicrous parody on one of Ovid's Epistles, addressed to Jermyn; some copies of which were dispersed through the court, and covered him with ridicule. It happened, after all, that Jermyn did not sail with the Guinea fleet; but Miss Jennings never gave him another opportunity of pretending to her hand. All his attempts to reinstate himself in her good graces were treated with scorn. She would not even listen to him; and after awhile, felt that to be rid of such a pitiful lover, was not so much a loss, as an escape.

She was in temper as little inclined to indulge eternal regrets, as Jermyn was formed to inspire them; and soon she shone forth afresh in all the lustre of her beauty. The proof she had just given, that where pride and feeling were touched she could rise superior to vanity and interest, lent to her character a higher value, and to her youth and loveliness an additional charm. Numberless suitors now pressed around her: among them

George Hamilton, (the younger brother of Miss Hamilton,) who has been so frequently mentioned.* He was young, noble, handsome, brave, good-natured—in short, he had but one fault; he had the trick of falling sincerely and desperately in love with every beautiful face that smiled upon him. His heart was a perfect furnace, which never lacked fuel. He had lately been jilted by Lady Chesterfield, and entangled by the coquetry of Miss Stuart; but again free, the sparkling graces of Miss Jennings were not likely to be lost on such an inflammable subject. He was captivated at once, and though he was not "*du bois dont on fait de grandes passions*," he was for this time very seriously and sighingly in love.

Hamilton's gay inconstancy was very different from levity: he was not a man who would lightly trust his honour to the keeping of a woman who could lightly esteem her own. He was but a younger brother, with a younger brother's portion; and Miss Jennings, in frankly accepting his addresses, gave the best proof that the insinuation conveyed in De Grammont, of her being cold and self-interested, is altogether unfounded.

They were married in the year 1665. Hamilton soon after accepted military rank in the French service; and, after receiving the honour of knighthood from Charles II., went over to France, accompanied by his wife. It appears that he greatly distinguished himself abroad; though for what particular exploits he was soon after

* See the Memoirs of Lady Chesterfield and Miss Stuart.

created by Louis XIV. Count and Mareschal-de-Camp, does not appear. He was unfortunately killed in Flanders within a few years after his marriage.*

It is to be regretted that the personal notices of Lady Hamilton—or the Countess Hamilton, as she is generally styled—are henceforth extremely confused and obscure: to connect these, and to reconcile various and opposing dates, has been a matter of some difficulty. She could not have been more than two-and-twenty when she was left a beautiful widow with three infant daughters; and it appears, that after her husband's death she had a pension from France, and returned to England, where her daughters were certainly educated.

The next notice I find of her is in Evelyn's Diary: he notes that when the Earl of Berkeley was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary to Paris in 1675, (for the arrangement of the treaty of Nimeguen,) he accompanied the earl and his suite as far as Dover. "There was," he adds, "in the company of my Lady Ambassadress, my Lady Hamilton, a sprightly young lady, much in the good graces of the family, wife of that valiant and

* It is difficult to reconcile the dates in the peerages with the occurrences: the death of Sir George Hamilton is placed in 1667, and it is said that he left three daughters. Now, it is clear, from Pepys' Diary, that Miss Jennings was still unmarried in the beginning of the year 1665; and from a passage in Evelyn, hereafter quoted, I am inclined to place his death much later. In the notes to the Life of Lady Russell, this Sir George Hamilton is confounded with the Colonel Hamilton (his younger brother, I believe,) who was taken prisoner at the battle of the Boyne.

worthy gentleman, George Hamilton, not long afterwards slain in the wars.* She had been Maid of Honour to the duchess, and now turned Papist."

The conversion of Lady Hamilton to the Roman Catholic faith, appears a very natural consequence of her feelings and position, both before and after her marriage: the Duchess of York, her patroness, had formally renounced Protestantism, to the horror of her father Lord Clarendon, and the consternation of Dr. Burnet, who had previously had the charge of her conscience. All the Hamiltons were Catholics; and, whatever were the motives, whether feeling, or conviction, or expediency, which induced Lady Hamilton to change her religion, such change was in the sequel sincere, and adhered to with constancy and fervour.

It must have been within the next two years, and while abroad with the Countess of Berkeley, that she again met Talbot, who was residing in France, an exile,—not by the course of justice, but certainly not voluntarily, from his own country. He had always been distinguished as a bigoted Papist, and a devoted adherent of the Duke of York; and while the Popish plot and the Exclusion Bill inflamed the public mind, his master had insisted on his absence as a means of personal safety. The lovers met again, thus unexpectedly,

* *Query*—Not long after his marriage, or not long after the date of this memorandum? Evelyn is frequently careless and obscure in the arrangement of his sentences, else we might presume with certainty that Sir George Hamilton was at this time (1675) living.

after a separation of many years, each freed from all former ties, for Talbot was now a widower without children. In her, time and sorrow had subdued the petulance of early feelings; but still young and not less beautiful than ever, Talbot could not behold her without acknowledging at once "*il segno del antica fiamma.*" And, in short, they were married at Paris about the year 1679.

They were again in England in 1683 and 1684.* Talbot still held his office of groom of the chamber to the Duke of York, and still kept his place in his favour and confidence; while his beautiful wife became as great a favourite with the new Duchess of York, (Maria d'Este,) as she had been with the former one. On the death of Charles II. and the accession of the duke, in 1685, he rewarded the steady and devoted attachment of Talbot by creating him Earl of Tyrconnel; and he was sent to take the command of the King's forces, and support the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland, whither Lady Tyrconnel accompanied him.

The Earl of Clarendon, son of the great Chancellor, was Lord-Lieutenant. The military and civil-government were thus divided; and the continual disagreement between Clarendon and Tyrconnel, opposed as

* It should seem that Talbot was enabled to return to England through the mediation of the Duke of Ormond, whom he is said to have requited very ungratefully, by plotting the duke's recall from the Irish government in 1684.—*Vide* Diary and Correspondence of Henry Earl of Clarendon.

they were in religion, politics, temper, and character, kept Ireland in a state of distraction for the next few years. It must be allowed, that while Talbot possessed many splendid qualities, his manners were ill calculated to conciliate exasperated minds. He was insolent and violent, even to the verge of brutality; and when under the slightest excitation, every second word was a tremendous oath.* The spirit and temper of his wife were of a more intellectual order, and she is said to have ruled him without much effort; but, as all her prejudices and passions held the same direction, she on many occasions only added the fuel of her feminine impatience to his headlong self-will.

Lord Melfort, one of James's most accredited agents in Ireland, speaks of Lady Tyrconnel's influence over

* The "swaggering" deportment of Talbot is very graphically described in some of Clarendon's letters: but we must recollect that all the usual authorities on the subject of Talbot's character and government are liable to suspicion, as proceeding from party animosity. Clarendon had inherited his father's hatred of the Talbots; and Talbot, who knew but one means to a given end, the short cut of violence, detested the slow, temporizing, insinuating policy of Clarendon. "Two qualities Talbot possessed in an eminent degree—wit and valour: and if to gifts so brilliant and so Irish be joined devotion to his country, and fidelity to the unfortunate and fated family with whose exile he began life, and with whose ruin he finished it, it cannot be denied that in his character the elements of evil were mixed with much great and striking good. Under happier circumstances, the good might have predominated; and he whose deeds are held, even by his own family, in such right estimation, might have shed a lustre on his race by those talents and heroism, which gave force to his passions and celebrity to his errors."—Lady Morgan.

her husband;* complains in his letters of her dissimulation and her intriguing propensities; and asserts that the King's affairs will never go well till she is persuaded to leave Ireland, and return to France. But before we attach too much importance to Lord Melfort's opinion, we should consider that he hated Lady Tyrconnel, and was himself of a temper so impatient, officious, and meddling, that he became insupportable even to those whom he most wished to serve: he is accused of embroiling the King's affairs both in Ireland and at St. Germain's, and was at length sent out of the way, under the pretence of a mission to Rome. It is also observable that, though we have few particulars of the conduct of Lady Tyrconnel during this eventful period, the terms in which she is alluded to are generally favourable to her character, and leave a strong impression of her talents and her prudence, as well as of her influence.

At the Revolution, Tyrconnel, faithful to the interests of his old master, refused to take the oath of allegiance to William III., and placed himself at the head of King James's party in Ireland; and James rewarded his fidelity by sending him over the patent of Viceroy, and appointing him Commander-in-Chief. Lady Tyrconnel, from this time, resided in Dublin Castle with her three beautiful daughters, now growing into womanhood. She held her state as Vice-queen with much grace and mag-

* In allusion to some measures they were then contemplating, he says pointedly, "This will draw in my lady, and consequently my lord," &c.—*Vide* Macpherson's State Papers.

nificence; and while her sister, Lady Churchill, threw all the weight of her influence, talents, and spirit into the opposite party, she supported with yet more enthusiasm the interests of the exiled family, in which all the Hamiltons and all the Talbots were engaged heart and soul.

It was during her reign in Ireland,—for such it might truly be called,—that Lady Tyrconnel married her three daughters by Hamilton to three of the wealthiest and most powerful among the Irish nobles. Elizabeth, the eldest, became the wife of Laurence, first Viscount Rosse; Frances, the second and most beautiful of the three, married Henry, eighth Viscount Dillon; and Mary, the youngest, married Nicholas Viscount Kingsland. They have since been distinguished as "the three Viscountesses."

In 1689, when James II. had resolved to try his fortune in Ireland, he was met by Tyrconnel and a numerous train of gallant and devoted followers, and conducted to Dublin Castle, where Lady Tyrconnel entertained him and his foreign and Irish adherents with French urbanity and Irish hospitality. On this occasion Tyrconnel was advanced to the dignity of Marquis and Duke of Tyrconnel, and received from the King every mark of affection and confidence. Six months afterwards the battle of the Boyne was fought, in which fifteen Talbots of Tyrconnel's family were slain, and he himself fought like a hero of romance. After that memorable defeat, King James and Tyrconnel reached

Dublin on the evening of the same day. The duchess, who had been left in the castle, had passed four-and-twenty hours in all the agonies of suspense; but when the worst was known, she showed that the spirit and strength of mind which had distinguished her in her early days was not all extinguished. When the King and her husband arrived as fugitives from the lost battle, on which her fortunes and her hopes had depended, harassed, faint, and so covered with mud that their persons could scarcely be distinguished, she, hearing of their plight, assembled all her household in state, dressed herself richly, and received the fugitive King and his dispirited friends with all the splendour of court etiquette. Advancing to the head of the grand staircase with all her attendants, she kneeled on one knee, congratulated him on his safety, and invited him to a banquet; respectfully inquiring what refreshment he would be pleased to take at the moment. James answered, sadly, that he had but little stomach for supper, considering the sorry breakfast he had made that morning. She, however, led the way to a banquet already prepared; and did the honours with as much self-possession and dignity as Lady Macbeth, though racked at the moment with equal terror and anxiety.

The next day a council was held, when, in spite of the advice of the Duke and Duchess of Tyrconnel, James acceded to the wishes of Lauzun and his French followers, who were panic-struck, and determined on flying to France. In the confused accounts of the movements of the two parties at this time, we find no farther mention

made of the Duchess of Tyrconnel, whose situation must have been in the highest degree interesting and agitating: it appears, however, that she and her husband quitted Ireland, either in company with the King, or immediately after him, leaving her three married daughters, and taking with her her two children by Tyrconnel. She joined the exiled court at St. Germain's, where she remained for several years.

In the troublesome times which ensued, Tyrconnel continued to maintain the cause of James II. in Ireland with unshaken loyalty and courage, through evil repute and good repute: he was destined, however, to exhibit another proof of that ingratitude which has been the stigma of the whole race of Stuart, and the curse of those who were devoted to its fortunes. Talbot, who hated the French party, and was disgusted by their insolence and exactions, threw himself into the Irish party; and it is even said that his first wish (so changed was he now by time, and cares, and calamity,) was to give peace to his own wretched country by acting as moderator between all the factions.* However this may be, King James became mistrustful of his old and faithful servant; and, with a thankless duplicity, sent over a commission, superseding Tyrconnel in all his governments and the chief command: but so loved as well as feared was Tyrconnel throughout the whole country, that it was deemed necessary to keep this commission and his disgrace a profound secret. At length, in 1691, when preparing to defend Limerick for the

* Harris's Life of William III.

second time against William III., Tyrconnel died suddenly by poison administered in a cup of ratafia. The times were so critical, his enemies were so numerous and bitter, and his friends so divided and so wrong-headed, that his death caused only a temporary excitement: the siege went on, and the celebrated Sarsfield succeeded Talbot in the chief command.*

After the death of her husband, the Duchess of Tyrconnel continued to reside abroad till the dispersion of the court of St. Germain's, and the marriage of her daughters by Talbot. During this time she appears to have been reduced to great distress and poverty, for she is mentioned among the poor Jacobites who were assisted out of the pension which James II. received from the Pope. She received on this occasion three thousand crowns, (about four hundred pounds,) but it was only a temporary relief. In 1705 she was in England, and had a private interview with her brother-in-law, the Duke of Marlborough, then at the height of his power. Respecting her visit to England, Horace Walpole relates a singular anecdote, for which he does not give his authority; but he was personally acquainted with so many of the family, that his own authority, as the very prince of biographical gossip, may be considered all-sufficient.

* Limerick surrendered on the 13th of October, 1691. The first siege of Limerick, in August 1690, when Tyrconnel and the Duke de Lauzun nobly defended it, and obliged William III. to raise the siege, is famous in the military history of Ireland; and the second siege, which ended in the surrender of the city, is yet more fatally celebrated in the political annals of that miserable country.

At that time, part of the Royal Exchange was let out in small stalls or shops, perhaps something like a modern bazaar, and was a favourite and fashionable resort of women of the highest rank. It is said that the Duchess of Tyrconnel, being reduced to absolute want on her arrival in England, and unable for some time to procure secret access to her family, hired one of the stalls under the Royal Exchange, and maintained herself by the sale of small articles of haberdashery. She wore a white dress wrapping her whole person, and a white mask, which she never removed, and excited much interest and curiosity.

It is now very well known, that the Duke of Marlborough was at this time carrying on some intrigues with the exiled court and the leading Jacobites; and it is possible, and very probable, that his interview with the Duchess of Tyrconnel was partly of a political nature: this, however, can only be presumed. The more apparent result of this visit was, that she obtained the restoration of a small part of her husband's property, with permission to reside in Dublin. To that city, perhaps endeared to her as the scene of past happiness, and power, and splendour, she returned in 1706, a widow, poor, proscribed, and broken-hearted. The account of the last years of this celebrated beauty, and really admirable and distinguished woman, cannot be contemplated without a sad and serious feeling. While her high-spirited sister, the Duchess of Marlborough, was ruling the councils of England, or playing a despe-

rate and contemptible game for power,—the sport of her own turbulent passions, and the victim of the perfidy and the artifices of others,—the Duchess of Tyrconnel withdrew from the world: she established on the site of her husband's house, in King-street, a nunnery of the order of Poor Clares, and she passed, in retreat and the practice of the most austere devotion, the rest of her varied life. Her death was miserable: one cold wintry night, during an intense frost, she fell out of her bed; and being too feeble to rise or call for assistance, she was discovered next morning lying on the floor in a state of insensibility. It was found impossible to restore warmth or motion to her frozen limbs; and after lingering a few hours in a half lethargic state, she gradually sank into death. She expired on the 29th of February, 1730, in her eighty-second year; and on the 9th of March following, she was interred in the cathedral church of St. Patrick.

Her eldest daughter by the Duke of Tyrconnel, Lady Charlotte Talbot, was married to the Prince de Vintimiglia, and left two daughters: the eldest married the Comte de Verac, and the other the Neapolitan Prince Belmonte; but both died without leaving any offspring. Of the youngest Lady Talbot, I find no account.

Of the "three Viscountesses," Lady Dillon appears to have been the most remarkable, and to have inherited, with the high blood of the Hamiltons, no small share of that lively and wilful temper which distinguished her

mother's family. There is a curious tradition respecting her still preserved among the peasantry of the country in which she resided. It is related that, on the death of Lord Dillon, she inhabited Laughlin Castle, then only one of the numerous castles and palaces possessed by the Irish Dillons. This princely feudal edifice covered two acres of land; and, with the estate round it, was assigned to her as her jointure, but with the proviso, that she should reside during her life in the castle. The lady, in her widowhood, was seized with a passion for a young Englishman; and being unable to detain him with her, or to follow him to England as long as her castle existed, she determined on the wildest and boldest project that ever entered the head of an impetuous woman borne away by the violence of passion: she ordered a banquet to be spread in her garden, then fired the castle, and feasted by the light of the blazing pile. After supper, and while the towers were yet burning, she set off for England with her lover.

Such is the tale of the peasantry round Laughlin Castle; and it must be allowed that there are few anecdotes more striking and picturesque to be found in the chronicles of romance.

The present Viscount Dillon is the lineal descendant of La Belle Jennings. Arthur Dillon, who was guillotined during the French Revolution, was her great-great-great-grandson; his daughter, Fanny Dillon, married General Count Bertrand, celebrated for his fidelity to Napoleon, and his long residence at St. Helena.

Portraits of the Duchess of Tyrconnel are extremely rare, and those engraved for the various editions of De Grammont are all fictitious. The engraving, which forms the frontispiece to this work, is from an original picture in the possession of Earl Spencer.

[It seems not to have been in 1705, but in 1708, that Lady Tyrconnel visited England. The correspondence of her sister, the Duchess of Marlborough, lately published by Mr. Colburn, seems to set at least the manner of her visit, and the conduct of the Duke of Marlborough, in a light entirely different from that in which it appears in the foregoing narrative. The duke was in Flanders, occupied in the movements which preceded the battle of Oudenarde. On the 14th of May, he writes to the duchess, from Brussels, "I went yesterday to wait upon Lady Tyrconnel, who I think is grown very old, and her hoarseness much worse than when I saw her last." Three days after, May 17, he again writes, "I was yesterday a long while with Lady Tyrconnel, who complains very much of the non-payment of their rents; by what they say, I am afraid they are very unjustly dealt with." On the 24th of the same month, the duke says, "When I took leave of Lady Tyrconnel, she told me that her jointure in Ireland was in such disorder, that there was an absolute necessity for her going for two or three months for the better settling of it. As the climate of Ireland will not permit her being there in the winter, she should begin her journey about ten

days hence: she said that she did not intend to go to London, but hoped she might have the pleasure of seeing you at St. Albans. I have offered her all that might be in my power to make her journey to Holland and England easy. As also, that if she cared to stay at St. Albans, either at her going or return, you would offer it her with good heart. You will find her face a good deal changed, but in the discourse I have had with her, she seems to be very reasonable and kind." On the 31st, "I had a letter yesterday from your sister Lady Tyrconnel, in which she tells me that she leaves Brussells in two or three days, and that her stay in Holland will be no longer than by going by the first safe opportunity, so that you will hear very quickly from her."—ED.]

THE END.

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